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10¢

NOVEMBER 1927

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The Messenger

New Opinion of the New Negro

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The MESSENGER is the recognized mouthpiece of the more advanced section of the Negro group in the United States. For ten years it has spoken intelligently and eloquently in behalf of organization of labor, white as well as black, believing, as it does, that the questions of wages, hours of work, safeguards on the job and proper representation of the worker, are the most important confronting the majority of the men and women, white as well as black, in the United States. For two years it has been the official organ of The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters whose organization it espoused and whose battles it has consistently fought.

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The Messenger

New Opinion of the New Negro

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WHY HAS THE AFRAMERICAN PRODUCED NO CREATIVE MUSICAL GENIUSES?

By A DISTINGUISHED NEGRO COMPOSER

When one considers the title of this article one is quite apt to wonder who has the effrontery to put such a question. For is it not an accepted fact that the Negro is wonderfully gifted in music? And if one boasts of race pride one will proudly point to a few who are today in public favor, forgetting that there are approximately twelve million American Negroes under consideration. Moreover, one is likely to know that practically all first class conservatories are open to Negro students and that there are several thousand Negro musicians who are making above the average "living." But the object of this article is to call attention to the meagre creative contributions to American Art that contemporary Negroes are making and this article is written in a spirit of helpful criticism only.

In the artistic growth of a people the work in any creative field should be taken up successively at its different stages by relays of innumerable workers. That is to say that, allowing for the equal opportunity for technical training and for economic encouragement which would give the Negro artist the leisure for creative work and starting, say, from the Negro Chevalier St. George who wrote string quartettes and concertos in France in 1760 it seems reasonable to suppose that by now the Negro should have many string quartettes, concertos and operas to his racial credit. As a matter of fact the Negro has only a handful of clever arrangers and song writers with a sprinkling of writers for choirs, choral bodies and melodious piano pieces with an occasional output of other instrumental pieces. Of course, there is a reason. In considering the reason let us sketch the life of the average Negro child of today with musical talent of a high order.

To begin with, he (we say "he" for convenience) is born of parents of the average mental and cultural equipment. The parents have grown up through the "nineties." They are perhaps graduates of a Negro college of this period. They have heard their own artists: Madam Sisseretta Jones, Flora Batson, Madam Selika, Sidney Woodward, Hamilton Hodges, Harry Burleigh among the singers and Joseph Douglass, Will Marion Cook, Samuel Jamison, Ida Platt, Harriet Gibbs (Marshall), Madam Montgomery and a few others among the instrumentalists. It will be seen that the singers were in the majority. With the advent of the Negro show a large number of talented singers for economic reasons went into these shows and the concert artist with a few exceptions, ceased to be. In short, about 1896 the Negro child was not encouraged to aspire to a musical position which was above the average "show musician." This then, was the musical heritage in America for the Negro child of this period. What was the result? There was scarcely any vocal preparation and only sufficient instrumental preparation to take one's place in a Negro show or in a Negro dance orchestra. From this condition grew the well-known and accepted opinion that this type of work paid more money than concert or solo work which could only come with longer years of technical preparation and of course, deprivation and sacrifice. The average Negro had so well absorbed the American faith that the dollar alone was the only thing worth while in life that the thought of giving over years to technical training for creative work was entirely out of the question. Consequently in this period of numerous smart Negro shows and a galaxy of clever but—for the most part—uncultivated vocalists the Negro's creative musical contribution was nil. So the musical child of this period may have had, and likely did have, all the imaginative and emotional qualities which all Negroes are supposed to possess, but his cultural environment, a product of forced isolation, furnished no incentive or stimulation or encouragement to exploit his possibilities.

Again let us assume that our hypothecated average Negro child of talent and ambition growing up at this period, went through the high school. His musical training in the elementary and high schools was almost negligible when measured by standards of today. He simply "took lessons." In other words, if he showed a bent for instrumental study he took piano or violin lessons after school at his parents' expense. Or if he displayed vocal talent, he just sang, the church or parlor entertainment furnishing stimulating applause. (The Negro's *natural* voice has always stood him in good stead among "friends of the family.") Perhaps he attempted to compose songs of the ballad or popular type and piano pieces of a like order. Few of the latter would be accepted by a reputable publisher because such compositions would be highly defective, resulting from the composer's lack of theoretical training and musical background. If perchance a few studied at first rate conservatories or under competent private teachers, economic conditions caused most of them to turn their attention to popular but quickly remunerative work. Few, if any, attempted compositions in larger forms such as string quartettes. Even today with the increased facilities for greater study, the sonata, concerto, and symphony seem to be beyond the pale of calculable probability.

Simultaneous with this period that we have roughly sketched, Coleridge Taylor was growing up in England under different economic conditions. Coleridge Taylor carried through a thorough course of study in theory and wrote string quartettes, a symphony or two and created works in the major choral forms. Of course we are justified in acclaiming Coleridge Taylor a genius. But our hypothetical Negro child of the period had neither the philanthropic backing nor the economic support to properly get this thorough theoretical training.

In the United States we find that the creative talent is not exhibited by a Negro until he is in his thirties or forties. He does not reach the leisure period much before this age when he can give himself up to any large degree of original composition. But what has happened prior to this phase of his development when he is attracting

(*Continued on page 338*)

THE NEGRO'S RECEPTION IN EUROPE

By J. A. ROGERS

As one travels through Europe, this singular fact will be noted: The closer the man of color gets to imperialism, the less brutal he will find it; indeed brutal is not the proper word in this case; friendly is by far the better one. In South Africa or in India, the Negro or the Hindu who must get off the sidewalk at the approach of a white person, can go anywhere his money will take him when in England, that white person's home. In South Africa, the Negro who would get eight years' imprisonment and a lashing to boot if caught with the lowest type of white prostitute, may, when in England, take a refined white woman to the best restaurant and cause little or no stir, or he may marry her. The Chinese or native Egyptian who would not be permitted in a white club in Shanghai or Cairo may also, when in England, be invited to the best clubs or to dine with the king.

Next to the United States, Belgium has the worst reputation for treatment of the Negro, yet personally, I know of no other country in Europe where a Negro, however dark, will receive a more friendly reception. Pretty much the same holds true of France, Germany, Holland, Portugal, Spain and the other European countries who have or had colonies with dark-skinned peoples. Of all these countries, England is the only one in which a Negro is likely to meet with discrimination and this, be it said, is largely due to the conduct of the Negroes themselves, for generally speaking, the Negro one finds in Europe, and most of all in England, is of a crude or a low type. I have yet to meet or to hear of a single case of color discrimination on the Continent, except by white Americans.

Yet are we not told by Nordic propagandists that there is an inherent antipathy between human beings with a white epidermis and those with a colored one; that antipathy increasing in proportion with the darkness of skin? Prejudice, modern psychologists declare, is caused by ignorance, by lack of acquaintance. Charles Lamb said something to the effect that it was very difficult to dislike a person whom we really knew. If this is true then we would expect to find the greater manifestations of color antipathy in Europe, where comparatively little is known or seen of the Negro, for in parts of Europe Negroes are still so scarce as to be a curiosity.

So, also, on the strength of the above theory one ought to find little or no color antipathy in say, the United States or South Africa for from the moment of birth till that of death the white person encounters Negroes in greater or less degree of intimacy. Further, as in the United States, there has been a fusion between white and black, while in Europe, the vast majority of Negroes one meets are what are known as full-blooded. Again, the Negro in the United States is, broadly speaking, of a much higher type, culturally and economically than the average Negro in Europe.

By all the laws of reason one ought to find less color antipathy in the United States and the other European colonies than in Europe itself, but, here the laws of logic seem entirely to have reversed themselves, to be topsy-turvy. For instance, a Negro, who has done a great service for America dines with half the crowned heads of Europe and then with the president of his own country. If *lese majesty* has been committed one would expect it in the former case. But no, it is the latter that causes the hue and cry. Why this great difference between the European at home and the European in the colonies?

Some time ago I put the question to a distinguished German writer and later to a French Negro of meagre education, and the reply in both cases was substantially the same. It was to the effect that the worst type of European, the greediest and most grasping went to the colonies, while the most cultured and refined stayed at home.

A rather sweeping statement this, but which when closely examined will be found to be full of truth. Peoples migrate from one country to another chiefly for economic reasons, that is, they go to the new land to get wealth, and since they are of the bolder, more adventurous type than the stay-at-homes, their spirit is to get that wealth by the shortest possible route.

For the acquisition of wealth the first essential is labor, cheap labor. In order to have a cheap labor supply a caste system is necessary, hence the European immigrant, who knew no color prejudice at home and is often himself a man of the lowest caste, on arriving among darker peoples in great numbers at once established a caste based on color. Quite often he arrives to find color caste so firmly established that he must conform to its dictates or life is made difficult for him by his fellow Europeans.

On arriving in what is now the United States, the white man brought his white slave with him, but he found a dark-skinned people, the Indians, and at once established a color caste and a system of enslavement. Later came the black man, and in order to establish the color caste more firmly, the white slave was finally freed.

Traditionally, the Negro in America is regarded as a slave—an emancipated one it is true, but who must always be in the servant's place. In the South one may see repeatedly a Negro seated beside a white woman in an automobile, but he is there as a servant. Let him be owner of the car, and the white woman his guest, and the result may be a lynching.

The laws of Georgia provide that if a Negro travels as a servant of a white person he may ride in the white coach. It is only when he travels on his own, so to speak, as his own employer, that he must ride jim-crow. In other words, if all Negroes remained servants of white persons there would be no need of separate coaches. What is true of Georgia is, in a measure, typical of the nation.

In Europe where as was said, one would expect to find a color discrimination, there is none. A black man finds no barrier against him. He may, and does, marry into the best families and moves in the highest circles. The cause? Negroes are not here in a sufficiently large number to form an exploitable labor supply.

It would seem to be clear then, that in spite of all that the Nordics have said on the subject, and of what so many Negroes have echoed in reply, that the so-called race question is merely one of cheap labor and how to secure it.

That, at least, is the conclusion that is becoming more and more rooted in my mind when, as I travel over the white man's country, I find blackness of skin is not an object of prejudice but of favor.

The Girl at the End of the Lane

By JAMES MICKLES

There's a girl at the end of the lane;
Not one of fashion, but plain;
Though her eyes seem to say,
"You may come on this way."
Her heart will not venture the same.

This girl at the end of the lane
Is as sweet as a rose, and unstained;
I've ne'er met before,
Such a girl I adore;
The world holds no other the same.

Oft' I pause at the end of the lane;
Enchanted, I plead there in vain;
Her smile then is grand,
But I can't understand,
Why her heart does not act just the same.

Immaculate girl of the lane;
She threw me a kiss from the train;
If I see her no more
I've lost treasures before;
But this one will not be the same.

Seeing the Light

By FRANCES SMITH BROWN

Who puts his wagon to a star,
Shall drive it but a night.
For unseen things will only bar
The ones that are in sight.

Every man may be alert and quick,
But first he must be slow.
The world is not so hard to lick,
But first a man must know.

A dreaming life is a wasted one,
Look inwardly upon your soul:
The battle fought will then be won,
And you have attained your goal.

Support your organization by paying dues regularly

NEGRO BUSINESS

Its Real Test Is Still Ahead

By ALBON L. HOLSEY

Secretary, National Negro Business League

Negro business may be grouped into five classes: personal service for white, personal service for Negroes, financial, retail, manufacturing.

The most important examples of the first class are the barbers and caterers, and in both of these fields our number is rapidly diminishing because of the white labor unions, chain hotels and the anti-Negro sentiment as evidenced in the recent attempt to pass laws in some Southern states confining Negro barbers to Negro trade.

Personal service for Negroes, which includes barbers, hairdressers, restaurants, hotels, taxicabs, etc., has made rapid gains for the same reason that personal service for whites has decreased—the isolation of the Negro race.

The financial group, including insurance companies, banks, real estate brokers, loan and investment concerns and endowment departments of fraternal organizations, has prospered because the convenient racial isolation has helped to save them from the sharp competition of an open field. In addition to that the race pride appeal has been more skillfully worked because the rewards, in desk or white collar positions with their attendant remuneration and freer access to the coveted privilege of handling money, have been quicker and more certain.

Retailers have encountered stiffer resistance than either group mentioned above for the reason that rapid changes in methods and standards in the entire retail field have more directly affected them. Our druggists have fared better than have the retailers of food and clothing because Negro physicians —another isolated group—provide them with a large prescription trade.

The mortality rate of Negro manufacturing concerns is excessive and too costly. Cotton oil mills, cotton mills, hosiery mills, shirt factories and a few others are listed among the efforts in this group which have perished because of the impasse of distribution. Anthony Overton overcame seemingly insurmountable handicaps and forced jobbers to handle his products. He blazed the way and made it easier for other toilet products to reach the retail trade through regular channels. Racial isolation has also helped the Tri-State Casket Company, the Waycross Casket Company and Charles Johnson, manufacturer of embalming fluid and other products for undertakers. Paul E. Johnson can "pass" so he works "both sides of the street" with his therapeutic lamps and is making good. Parker House Sausage, a meritorious product with an able executive, is also making forward strides. In Baltimore, New Orleans and a few other cities there are a few wholesale manufacturers of ice cream and candies, but their success is more or less localized.

Manufacturing is in the highest register of business. It embraces such factors as capital, organization, labor, and requires a thorough knowledge of distribution. It must follow our next great test which is mastery of the retail selling field.

Maiden of My Race

FRANCES SMITH BROWN

Your tears are wasted, maiden of my race.
There is no law that makes white kin to black;
And your lover swings there alone.
Your tears are wasted,
Maiden of my race.

Loud, boisterous yells of the mob;
Souless men who claim their blood,
And sell as souvenirs the lean bones.
The common and the noble herd are there,
Amidst a thousand tongues acclaimed brave,
And the leader sits high on his throne.

Brown maiden, you beat your bosom in despair,
And hang on the corpse of your beloved.
Your tears are wasted,
One of my race.

I asked twenty-five business leaders to tell me what proportion, in their opinion and from their experiences, of every dollar spent by the Negro for groceries, clothing and shoes went to Negro enterprises. The average of their estimates was *half a cent*. Pause and think of it.

In the absence of authentic figures I have deducted 20% from the average annual living cost for families of the entire country in order to arrive at the Negro's approximate annual expenditure for the three items mentioned above. The results are staggering.

For groceries the Negro race spends annually $2,200,000,000; for clothing $1,400,000,000; and for shoes $550,000,000, which gives us a grand total of $4,150,000,000. One half of one per cent of that amount is $20,750,000. It does not require much figuring and very little analysis to determine the great economic loss to the race in not sharing more largely in these annual expenditures.

It is unfortunate but true that the manpower of our retail grocery stores does not rate in training with the man-power in our insurance companies or even our drug stores. The reason is obvious. The young people of our race who leave our schools avoid the retail stores and prefer the insurance and allied fields because the rewards are quicker and because there is less capital required, less risk involved and less drudgery.

Ready-to-wear garments have left many Negro tailoring establishments with only cleaning and pressing. There are a few exceptions like the Buffington Tailoring Company of Memphis, which employs a large staff of cutters and fitters and maintains a field force of salesmen who cover several adjoining states. A few other enterprises like Elliott's of Muskogee, Hooker's of Tulsa, and Evan's of Laurinburg, North Carolina, are holding their own in the dry goods and clothing field, but their problems are many; not the least of which is keeping their staffs of salespeople filled with competent, reliable, trained young men and women who are willing to come in and learn the business from the ground up.

The retailers as a class have more difficulties than are found in the personal service field or in certain other types of business. The Negro retailer has to overcome the normal "consumer resistance" and in addition must face the resistance of his own people which expresses itself in such statements as: "Negro stores do not give the service that white stores give"; "Negro stores do not carry the variety that white stores carry"; "Negro stores charge a higher price than white stores charge"; and similar overworked phrases.

As the Negro race becomes more intelligent, it is more and more influenced by the advertising in magazines and newspapers and correspondingly is demanding a higher standard of merchandising service than the average Negro retailer has been able to supply. The discriminating Negro customer who prefers Beechnut Bacon or Earl and Wilson collars will not accept something "just as good" because a Negro sells it.

The next real test then for Negro business is in the retail field. In order to successfully enter this field the race must divert some of its better trained young men and women into the retail field and finance their enterprises with the surplus capital of Negro banks, insurance companies and fraternal organizations. The methods by which this rigorous test will be met include cooperative buying of factory outputs with specially advertised labels, cooperative advertising, such as the Negro Trade Week Movement sponsored by the National Negro Business League; group conferences, and a careful study of chain store methods. When this test has been met we can make a normal and gradual entrance into the field of manufacturing with well organized, efficient functioning units in the retail field to support and maintain the factories.

Until we, as a race, have so developed and expanded our business as to turn over through Negro business enterprises at least fifty per cent. of the annual expenditure for food, clothing, shelter, etc., or its equivalent in white trade, thereby establishing our ability to compete in the open field of advertising and selling, we can hardly claim, without some reservations, that the Negro has "made the grade" in business.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE RED CAPS

By ALLAN S. A. TITLEY

A Former Red Cap

In the September issue of the New York Central Lines Magazine an article entitled "Grand Central's Chief Red Cap Tells the World" gives a most inexcusable and flagrant misrepresentation of the work of Red Caps at Grand Central Terminal.

The publishers of the magazine take good care to write at the head of the article "By John R. Tunis, in the Elks Magazine." This leads the reader to believe that it is copied from the Elks Magazine and the New York Central publishers are free from any responsibility. It is not a question of who is responsible for the article. It is enough that such an article has appeared, and I am sure that within the breast of every Red Cap who possesses a speck of manhood the heated blood of resentment must rise to boiling point, checked only by the realization, that beneath the iron heel of a large corporation he dare not raise his voice in protest.

There is a vast difference between disseminating rumor and pursuing the truth. The writer seems to follow the former principle, and in some respects gives evidence of high powers of imagination. These imaginary powers rise to their highest point when he comes out with the statement: "For being a walking information booth, a human beast of burden, a guide to the city and the suburbs, a private detective and a friend and counselor to the traveling American, the Red Cap is usually paid by the Terminal Company a wage ranging from $40.00 to $80.00 a month." This is absurd; there is not a Red Cap in Grand Central Terminal, excepting the Chief, who receives $40.00 a month, unless he is doing extra work for the company. Captains receive $20 monthly, forty men receive $18 monthly, about one hundred men receive $1 monthly and the balance receive no salary at all. It may be well to inform the writer of the article that if every Red Cap received $40 a month there would not be five hundred men in the station. Not more than one hundred Red Caps were employed at the station during war times owing to the fact that every man had to receive a salary of at least $45 a month.

The writer also claims that in conversation with a Red Cap he was informed that men give more generously than women.

If this were investigated I am sure that there would be considerable variance of opinion. A great deal depends on the manner in which a porter presents himself to a lady. The cultured American lady pays in proportion to the intelligence of the porter who handles her baggage.

He also gives the time-worn joke about the Englishman missing a train, and claims that foreigners are not very generous to porters.

The article on the whole appears to be a feeble effort to praise the work of the Red Cap, but a statement of this kind is in reality detrimental to the Red Cap force, inasmuch as foreigners reading such a statement would be inclined to ignore the services of a Red Cap.

Tunis would probably be surprised to learn that the most generous travelers are Englishmen and Japanese.

After much childish and unnecessary writing, filling space rather than giving authentic information, the writer concludes with the most ridiculous and untrue statements regarding promotion and seniority. He should be informed that while a Red Cap is supposed to be well recommended this rule is not always adhered to. It depends on who sends him or who he knows in the Red Cap force and how these parties stand with the authorities. A Captain does not spend several weeks instructing a Red Cap, he merely shows him around the station and instructs him how to identify a trunk by check, and after that the new man is let loose in the station.

A Red Cap is supposed to be promoted according to seniority, but this is put into effect only in the case of an extra man becoming a regular man. This means that in the event of one of the forty regular men leaving the service, the oldest regular night man takes his place, the oldest of the men who receive $1 monthly takes the night man's place, and the oldest extra man becomes a one-dollar-a-month man. This is the only time that seniority is recognized.

Captains can be appointed at the will of those in authority whether they are in the service one year or twenty years.

If the writer had taken the trouble to investigate he would have discovered that some of the youngest men in the station are captains. Articles of this nature have appeared periodically in different magazines and as no protest has been made, the writers of these articles seem to be impressed with the idea that the Red Caps are benefited by such false information being given to the public.

In view of the fact that the working system of all other departments under the control of the company is always well represented to the public it seems unfair that the Red Cap force should be subjected to such ridicule. This is not only detrimental to the Red Cap but also to the company. It should be borne in mind that in the eyes of the traveling public a Red Cap is a representative of the company, and conclusions good or bad are formed according to how he presents himself to the passengers with whom he comes in contact.

Correct information concerning the Red Cap force cannot be gained by standing in a corner of the Grand Central Terminal, and seeing these men pass by laden with baggage, or by having a few minutes' conversation with one of the members of the force. Face to face with any problem, different minds respond to that problem in different ways, and the problem of making a living among the Red Caps is no exception to this rule. Six men will give six different answers if questioned on the subject.

When writing an article one should be familiar with his subject and be able to give correct information. If the writer of the article under discussion in some way could influence the authorities in order that better conditions may exist among the Red Caps, he would be doing that body of men a much greater and nobler service than writing articles which are not based on facts.

For the Shop Gal

By S. MILLER JOHNSON

She is a golden faery child.
  Her face is honey-colored, too.
She skips about her candy shop,
  While sunlight dances through
The door . . . . kissing my golden Sue.

She's everything the sun could wish,
  If form be everything.
If otherwise, then she's a fish;
  Her face, a keen warm sting.

A Monument That Mammy'd Like to View

By NATHANIEL WILLIAMS

They say old "Mammy's" services were great
From sixteen-twenty to eighteen-sixty-five.
And, even tho' they're starting rather late
Fond memories of dear Mammy they'd revive.

They would erect a statue in her honor
In the capital city of this nation, grand,
The lily whites suggest, they'll be the donor,
(The lily whites of Dixie—understand.)

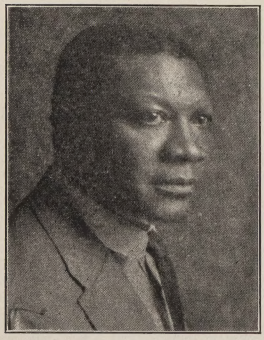
So; to this mocking voice suggesting
That they build a statue to her as a slave,
We'll say, let Mammy rest while she is resting,
You can't reward the service that she gave.

Since all your childhood cares were lightened
By the smiles that Mammy gave you, always kind,
Cast light upon the paths that should be brightened,
By justice to the brood she left behind.

If you must build a monument for Mammy,
Don't build one out of granite, bleak and gray,
Just give her little Ephriam and Sammy
The same old sunny smile she gave away.

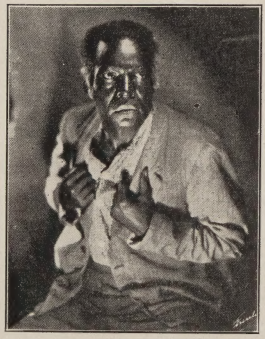
Give them the chance to know life's worth the living,
Give back some kindness Mammy had for you,
And you add a block, each day that you are giving,
To a monument that Mammy'd like to view.

THE AFRAMERICAN ACADEMY



J. E. Walker

Doctor Walker, a native of Mississippi, graduated from Meharry Medical College in 1906, and practiced medicine for 14 years. For ten years he was president of the Delta Penny Savings Bank, Indianola, Mississippi, the only Negro bank in the state, and a very successful one. From 1917 to 1923 he was president of the Mississippi Life Insurance Company whose assets increased from $60,000 to $470,000 during that period. He founded in 1923 the Universal Life Insurance Company, Memphis, Tenn., which was organized with a capital of $100,000. In 1926 the Universal Life purchased the Mississippi Life Insurance Co. from the Southern Insurance Company (white) to which it had been sold. Dr. Walker is a Director of the Fraternal Savings Bank & Trust Company of Memphis, Tenn., and is serving a second term as president of the National Negro Insurance Association. He lives in Memphis.

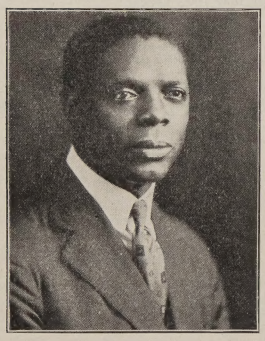


James B. Lowe

The star of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the Universal Film Corporation's production of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel of the same name, Mr. Lowe has suddenly leaped into fame as the foremost motion picture actor of the race. But recognition was a long time coming. Born in a Georgia town 47 years ago, he roamed up and down the country, often as a hobo, and lately staked claims in Alaska. Always he had the desire to act. Finally he landed in Los Angeles and began to get small parts in the pictures. Then came the role of The Emperor in "The Emperor Jones" in a Los Angeles theatre, in which he made a profound impression. It was quite natural then that Universal should have selected him to play the part of the immortal Uncle Tom, the greatest part ever assigned to a Negro screen actor.

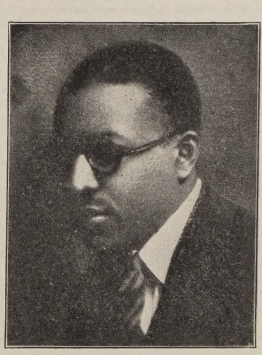
S. Miller Johnson

In August, 1925, a short story "The Golden Penknife' appeared in THE MESSENGER and attracted wide attention. Numbers of readers wanted to know about the author, S. Miller Johnson. Since then he has contributed two long poems, "Variations on a Black Theme" and "The Hasting Holler," to our aspiring journal, and more curiosity is aroused. To still the clamor we give the facts. Mr. Johnson was born in Calhoun County, Ark., and is a graduate of Hampton Institute. At present he is attending the City College in Detroit while clerking in the local post office. He reports that he is "happily unmarried at the ripe old age of 25." An extraordinary short story from his pen will appear shortly in the columns of this great religious journal.



William Pickens

A powerful orator, a keen thinker and a forceful and prolific writer, William Pickens, Field Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is one of the most widely known Negroes in the United States. Born in South Carolina, he was raised in Arkansas where he attended school in Little Rock. A graduate of Talladega College and Yale University, he taught school for years at Talladega, Wiley University and Morgan College. He has traveled extensively in America and Europe. He is a contributing editor of The Associated Negro Press and the Philadelphia Public Journal and author of "The Heir of Slaves," "The New Negro," "The Vengeance of the Gods," "Bursting Bonds" and "The American Aesop."



Charles S. Johnson

A native of Virginia, a graduate of Virginia Union University and the University of Chicago, former Associate Executive Secretary of the Chicago Race Relations Commission and editor of "The Negro in Chicago," Director of Research and Investigations, National Urban League, and most capable editor of its monthly organ, *Opportunity*, the polished and erudite Mr. Johnson has been one of the most earnest and active protagonists of the artistic and literary renaissance among the latter day Aframericans. The literary contests he has inaugurated under the auspices of *Opportunity* have gained national attention and endorsement and have been the means of uncovering and introducing many capable Negro writers.

THE SONGS OF YOUNG BLACK JOE

Reviewed By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

Negro Workaday Songs, Howard W. Odum and Guy B. Johnson. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C. Price $3.00.

Although this is a good book and worth every cent of the three bucks the publishers ask for it, it is comparatively easy to review. Critics, Bulwer-Lytton would have said, are like knaves. They are flies that feed on the sore part and would have no means of living if the body were in health. The Odum and Johnson opus is in the main a sound piece of work. In it I can discern no major faults, but it contains numerous minor flaws, microscopic skin fissures so to speak, which offer plenty of encouragement to flies.

Workaday Songs is a representative collection of the plaintive harmonies and picaresque ballads Negro floating laborers and road men ululate while laying down the section or waiting by the water tank for the fast freight. In getting the songs together the authors followed the field method of gathering their material at the source; that is, they adopted various means of getting up close to Negroes who felt for singing so they could catch the melodies rolling off their lips. Sometimes they would pay a rogue two bits for giving up his repertory while at other times they would merely sit still and listen to the darkies singing in the evening by the moonlight. Again they would disguise themselves as a pick and shovel and transcribe the melodies of the minstrels detained in the chain gang. Their method, as the results show, was probably as sound as any they could have employed; still their work is not without certain faults which might have been avoided.

Thomas Hardy once observed that it is a hard thing for women to express their feelings in a language evolved by men to express theirs. The same difficulty presents itself when the members of one race attempt to express their feelings in the speech developed by another race. For example I am having the devil of a time trying to make myself clear in this review, although the difficulty of the task is somewhat diminished by my knowledge of my limitations. I am really a sort of lilliputian Conrad trying to express myself in an alien tongue and further handicapped by the fact that I have no native speech to employ in the original formulation of my ideas. The unlettered maker of songs was in pretty much the same position. He found the President's English anything but a flexible medium of expression and in attempting to make it carry his ideas he had to work out a minature etymology and syntax of his own. That is, he invested words with new and peculiar meanings and arranged them in combinations handy to his own purposes. This work, of course, was done unconsciously, but as a result of it there has been developed a definite mode of speech which comes ready to the Negro's lips. It is a rich and musical variety of American and both educated and illiterate Negroes employ it in their common intercourse. It cannot be used in writing just yet because its subtleties would baffle the intelligence of linotypers and proofreaders, to say nothing of editors and critics.

The authors of Workaday Songs proceeded with their work fully aware of the peculiarities of Negro speech and commendably determined not to tamper with it. They set the songs down literally as they were sung or repeated by the darkies engaged for that purpose but they overlooked certain human factors which prevented the complete success of their work. Often, no doubt, the singer furbished up his song himself, feeling that since it was being sung for white folks it ought to be dressed up a bit; in which case he would insert words he would not ordinarly use. Or perhaps he was one of those by no means rare Negroes who harbor malice for all white men and take a secret delight in putting something over on them. Or perhaps he was a Negro with a sense of humor, and hence capable of any kind of impishness. Of course the probability of being victimized was not present when the authors simply sat by and listened to Negroes off to themselves singing for their own diversion, but here it is possible that they sometimes slipped into unconscious substitutions of their own, here and there writing words familiar to them instead of the ones actually sang. Whatever the cause, there are many places where the songs are marred by inaccurate transcription.

We come to examples:

In the songs of the Lonesome Road group, "Trouble All My Days" offers several opportunities to note the difference between the way a Negro would sing the song and the way the authors have transcribed it. The first four lines appear:

> Trouble, trouble
> Been had it all my days.
> Trouble, trouble.
> Got to mend this nigger's ways.

In Aframerican, with the melody adapted to the words rather than the words adapted to the melody, it would run this way:

> Trouble, trouble
> I've had it all my days.
> Trouble, trouble.
> Sure got to mend my ways.

The third verse as it is:

> But I's gwine away
> To rid trouble off my min'.
> But I's gwine away,
> To rid trouble off my min'.

Very rarely does a Negro use such a weak word as "but" in a song. He instinctively seeks a stronger or more emphatic term. He would sing:

> Lord, I's goin' away
> Get trouble off my mind.
> Lord, I's goin' away
> Get trouble off my mind.

This is how authors have written the fourth verse:

> Fair brown, fair brown,
> Who may your regular be?
> If you got no regular,
> Please take a peep at me.

(*Continued on page* 333)

TWO POEMS

By a Young Nordic Southerner

Raggetybag

I'm white as snow
But my new beau,
He's black.

Now my folks rave
And his behave
So bad.

As if they fear
We're dull or queer
Or mad.

Got lots of foes,
No plans, no clothes,
No jack.

No hope of gains,
For we've no brains
To sell.

We've got desire,
And youth, and fire;
That's all.

But I love him,
So black and slim
And tall.

And I'll tramping go
With my black beau,
To Hell!

The Circle

Feel on waking
Empty, aching,
Full of fear,
While I lie here
Train is taking
Him from me,
My black baby . . .

Riding down
To white folks' town,
Money making
Peddling gin
To Big Boss men.

Pulls his line
His monkey shine,
Bowing, scraping,
Clowning, faking,
Raking in
Caucasian tin . . .

Is he breaking
Even, eh?
I'll say!
Watch him shaking
Blues away
At end of day
With his ofay!

"BEST" EDITORIAL FOR SEPTEMBER

Selected from the American Negro Press

By EUGENE GORDON

Noted Journalist on Staff of Boston Post

This matter of selecting the "best" one of any class of things is always full of risks for the foolhardy who attempt it; however, those who explain their methods more often escape wrath than those who do not. As a matter of necessity, especially if one person makes the selection, the method must *be arbitrary. If it be arbitrary it* must *follow certain lines of guidance — certain rules from which no appeal is allowed. Moreover, the word "best," as used nowadays in our appraisal of qualities in stories, books, newspapers, plays, and so on, is far from being an absolute term; at best "best" as thus employed is merely relative, and its relativeness becomes apparent in proportion as the selector of the "best" be a "committee" of one person or of several. For that reason no story or editorial or book or play selected as the "best" should be considered as unqualifiedly perfect; it should be considered merely as having met more thoroughly than any other story or editorial or book or play* that was read by the selector *the arbitrary rules or tests applied to it.*

As there are in other literary forms certain elastic principles which govern them, so are there in the newspaper editorial. For the purpose of this new department, however, the elasticity must be removed. The principles made hard and rigid. If this were not done the rules would not be arbitrary, and arbitrary they must *be, to be effective, in this particular undertaking.*

I have made for my use a standard rule by which each editorial read during the month will be measured. That one which adjusts itself most nearly perfectly to this standard will be chosen as the best *of all those examined. A newspaper's editorials may be selected more than once.*

The best of the September editorials that came to my attention were only fair. There was a vast deal of mediocrity, some evidence of righteous indignation properly expressed, and, here and there, an approach toward excellent editorial writings. But the goal was never quite reached by any one of them.

In my opinion the Chicago *Defender's* editorial on the Locke-Stoddard debate in the October *Forum* is the best comment thus far published. Both gentlemen were arguing beside the point, and the *Defender* editorial clearly shows why.

This editorial (which might have been briefer), called "To Mr. Stoddard," was printed in the *Defender* September 24th, and follows:

TO MR. STODDARD

If Lothrop Stoddard thinks the subject of Social Equality, Cultural Equality and the numerous other equalities mentioned by him in the October Forum, is closed by his answer to Alain Locke's statement in the same issue of that magazine, he is doomed to the biggest disappointment of his life! Standing on the sidelines, watching with eager interest the word battle waged by these two distinguished representatives of America's major race group, are millions of others—Americans all—and all eager to have the last word. We'll have ours now!

Mr. Stoddard is not unknown to readers of the Defender. He came into uncertain fame and questionable popularity about seven years ago when he published his first book on the world's race problem under the title, "The Rising Tide of Color," wherein he exposed his opinions concerning the subject which seems nearest his heart. Since that time he has burst into the limelight through various publications dealing with the same theme. And now, speaking with authority and the force of assurance that what he says is indisputable, he closes the subject in what he must consider a "masterful fashion."

The only thing wrong with it is that there is nothing right about it. White supremacy itself is a myth—a term coined for silly bigots and sentimental spellbinders. There is such a thing as white dominance—a condition in which those who like to think of themselves as white people have imposed through superior numbers upon others. White America, likewise, is a doubtful term.. More than 300 years have passed since the first group of Englanders, composed chiefly of dissatisfied workers, prison inmates, religious fanatics and slaves—white slaves—landed on the shores of what is now America. In that group were few who could command any sort of recognition in their native country.

Since that time representatives of those same classes have poured into this country from every country in Europe. They have come to mix their bloods with what they found here, and give rise to the race that now inspires Mr. Stoddard with his reverence for the word white. Since that time, also, 4,000,000 natives of Africa have mixed their blood with the blood of Mr. Stoddard's race, until today there are fewer than 2,000,000 persons in this country who can be called pure Africans, 9,000,000 of mixed African and white extraction, and the Lord knows how many so light that they have gone over entirely to Mr. Stoddard's race.

Who, we should like to ask Mr. Stoddard, is responsible for this condition in "White America"? Can the African, who was the under dog through it all, be accountable for the intermixture? Again. what does this prove to Mr. Stoddard's scientific mind, we should like to know?

"Even if we entirely disregard the weight of scientific evidence which clearly tends to show that crosses between white and Negro are biologically undesirable," says Mr. Stoddard, "we must be guided by one fact which has been scientifically determined beyond all doubt —the fact that such crosses produce highly disruptive effects."

Here, again, the gentleman is either deliberately falsifying or taking gross liberties with science, for science has proved no such thing. Rather it has proved the direct opposite—that is, unbiased, unprejudiced science. Not only has the opposite been proved by science, but history—white history—has shown that racial admixtures have been the saving graces of civilization wherever it has been saved! Even England has had its mixture!

Did not Hannibal, the black Carthaginian, take thousands of soldiers with him on his jaunt over the Alps to the mouth of Rome, and are not the results of this expedition seen today? What happened to the 30,000 fair-haired, blue-eyed soldiers that followed Alexander in his conquests, and where are the fair-haired, blue-eyed Greeks today? Did not the Moors overrun Spain at one time? What about the tribes of Goths that swept down out of the mountains to conquer what is now France and to form the nucleus of what is now the French race? Did not "William the Conquerer," who defeated the Briton, Harold, at Hastings in 1066, mix the blood of his followers with that of those he subdued?

All along the line from pre-Biblical times to the present are these mixtures, and all have contributed their bits to what we now know as civilization. They will continue, call them whatever you will, Lothrop Stoddard to the contrary. America is a small segment of the whole that is our civilization, and America divided into black and white is infinitely smaller.

Whether we want amalgamation or whether we are silly enough to believe that two races can make up a single great nation and still remain separate and distinct within that nation, will not alter the ultimate results. Amalgamation is proceeding now; we who can see through unbiased eyes can attest to this fact. It is proceeding along the most unsatisfactory lines, to be sure, but it is happening. as science must have told Mr. Stoddard. It will proceed with or without the consent of society.

In passing, we should like to ask Mr. Stoddard whether he has ever heard of Alexander Dumas, an example of the mixture he deplores, who, through equality of opportunity and free social intercourse with those of his day, attained distinction that makes him the envy of Stoddards the world over? And Dumas was just one of the multitude!

The trouble with Mr. Stoddard is that he is a propagandizing romanticist. He states as facts things that he desires, and deludes himself into believing that they are true. But he will find that he can no more stop the course of events than he can stop the course of the sun; both are completely beyond his control. America will be a great nation in spite of Lathrop Stoddard, and the time will yet come when all races in America shall be as one.

(*Continued on page* 338)

THE BLACK MAN'S BLUFF

By LEE SELMAN

I MUST confess that I am somewhat disappointed with the literati of the New Negro. True enough, he has taken the lowly chitterling and has elevated it beside the royal caviar; and he has softened the harsh brayings of the jackass until now it is musical as the whimperings of a young filly in a field of clover. But the greatest mine of all has been left unexplored—the humble but highly utilitarian overalls. Occasionally the word does find its way into print through the medium of some of the World's Greatest Weeklies, but always this is in the nature of an admonition; Remember the overalls, and leave them at work.

Perhaps, though, the great journalists are too prone to forget that when the laborer was transplanted from the barren wastes of hate to the verdant fields of love, the old psychology would follow. This psychology has been sixty years in the making and is not to be treated lightly. It started when the white man willed that blue denim was the uniform of servitude.

They even extended their fiat to include little children, perhaps cognizant of the fact that as the child, so is the man. Thus it was that most of the so-called Race leaders paddled to school, clad in the regulation overalls. Sometimes into the spacious pockets, an apple was dropped—lagniappe for the teacher. Not infrequently, however, they were used to secrete an ugly toad which at the most opportune moment was used to spread consternation among the lassies; here, also, reposed the sling shot and the chinaberries.

Perhaps, though, overalls are too modern to be immortalized in poetry and song. The Spirituals were the heart throbbings of a race burdened for scores of years, but it has remained for men like the Johnsons to reduce them to intelligible English and readable music.

At the time when the Spirituals were being crystallized overalls were unknown. The slaves might have their "jeans," but for ordinary wear there was not infrequently a garment of unbleached material resembling very closely the artists' smocks of today.

Natchitoches, La., has a statue of a good darkey, presumably the antebellum type, and his lower garments are unmistakably pants. This then has been the cycle: shirttails, frock-tails, and overalls. From the cotton fields, through the legislative chambers, to the street corners were the routes. Then it was that the Negro discovered that he was of no economic value to anyone except himself. Thus, then following the lines of least resistance, came the overalls.

Six days do they labor: from the washday to the breakdown. But on Sundays when men turn aside to attempt to reconcile themselves to their positions in society; when men seek to change their environment, even if only temporarily, then the overalls are laid aside.

This time the preacher calls the bluff and draws in the pot. Such is Life! On the morrow the oxen are again goaded to desperation. And, since it is far easier to side step than to face the issue; and experience having taught that bluffing is as creditable as honest labor, they bluff.

Roughly speaking, Negroes may be divided into two classes: the white collar, and the overalls. The white collar class embraces the professionals—the doctor, the teacher, and the minister. Perhaps, here too may be classed the commercial group—the grocer, the undertaker, and the insurance man. But not infrequently, having been denied the advantages of that higher training, they are somewhat careless of their appearances; from inattention and use their celluloid collars are seered as brown as autumn's leaves. The overalls group takes up the remainder. There is the mill worker who lives across town, and who wades through mud and water to reach his work. And there is the professional loafer who lives in the "quarters," and who has an aversion to any sort of labor.

Long since, though, he has learned that attired in a suit of overalls he needs no passport anywhere; overalls, of course, being the laborers' garb—in short, the black man's bluff. In Atlanta he may know just where there are "ofays"; in Memphis he may try to interest one in finding the little red card; in Dallas he may be a walking saloon, but ever and anon, attired in his suit of blue denim, no one questions his comings, and his goings. Perhaps, if some Negro from Chicago or Cleveland were to have the foresight to don overalls before returning to "ole Miss" he would, indeed, be given a grand ovation. Overalls, to the Caucasian signify obeisance and servility; to the Negro, the gentle art of getting by. Sometimes this theory is practiced ad nauseam. A few years since the principal of a southern school used overalls as the uniforms for the members of his band. Thus, attired, they toured the state gathering in the shekels.

Perhaps, every one has heard the classical remark of the servant:

"More rain, more rest."

His employer inadvertently hearing him demanded sharply, "What's that you say?"

"More rain, more grass, boss."

Thus it is with the overalls brigade, always proclaiming from the housetops:

"More rain, more grass!"

Of course, it would be inaccurate to class the Negro as shiftless, but it is a fact that long association with the whites and their policy of doing nothing that can be conveniently postponed, his using the same text books which are masterpieces of the southern propaganda, and the gentle spiritual caresses of the same white God have given him the same inclinations. Since, however, he is supposed to work, he has adopted the overalls.

This idea of overalls and the Negro laborer being correlatives has permeated the very woof and warp of our innermost life. Go to any cabaret or theatre, presently before the footlights, there amble the colored comedians, clad in the regulation denim. Then a dephlogisticated tenor with belladona in his eyes will wail a nostalgia for his beloved "Bam."

The critic will write in his *feuilleton*, "It is a work of Art—a verisimilitude of reality." But ever, and anon, it is the black man's bluff.

Alas! the old order changeth. Democrats are stealing the thunder of the Republicans and in the innermost councils are speaking of a protective tariff. Republicans are moving into the Bourbon south, and are proving themselves political chameleons. Why? Economists call it the industrialization of the South. Birmingham is already making bids as the greatest steel producing center. Atlanta is extending itself, and is advertising extensively in the North for more industries. Quite naturally these changes will give a different interpretation to the wearer of overalls. And when this metamorphosis is achieved; when the cocoon finally emerges from his web of indifference to extend himself in the balmy atmosphere of industrialism, with all the potency, and charm be gone from the overalls? Will there then be intoned a solemn requiem for the departed glory?

"Alas! poor Yorick, I knew him well."

The White Man Passes

By ROBERT WHITAKER

The Dark Folks stir with quick complaint
Against the White Man's rule,
No more is the Caucasian saint,
The other man a fool;
Nor Nordic myth, nor Saxon blood,
Nor yet the Christian creed
Can stay the swiftly swelling flood
That knows no race nor breed.

The White Man's word has set the pace
The White Man's deed denies,
He has proclaimed to every race
The right of all to rise,
Has gloried in his own revolts
Against the ruling few,
And taught how mightier than bolts
The light that shineth through.

And now no canting talk of grace
Which he would fain bestow,
Can save for him the upper place
While others take the low;
No color line of any shade
Can justify his rod,
Nor any people now be made
To think of him as god.

The White Man's day is all but done,
And what his fate may be
One only knows, who drives the sun
And walks upon the sea.
But if men reap as they have sown,
The White Man well may crave
The passing of the Sword and Throne,
Or else—an early grave.

Support your organization by paying dues regularly

THE LITTLE VIRGIN

By LANGSTON HUGHES

The "West Illana" dipped slowly through the green water seven days out from the port of New York. But in a week at sea even a crew made up of Greeks, West Indian Negroes, Irish, Portuguese and Americans can become pretty well acquainted. When the weather is warm and sailors lounge on the after-deck of evenings telling stories, men learn to know one another. The sea breeds a strange comradeship, a strict fraternity, and many a time I have seen the most heterogeneous crew imaginable stick together like brothers in a sailors' fight in a foreign port. Nor is there ever any separation in that vast verbal warfare all seamen wage against all chief stewards over the always bad food. The sea is like a wide-armed mother and the humble toilers of the sea, blood brothers.

But sometimes there comes one to whom the ways of the water folk are strange. . . . The sailors called him the Little Virgin because they discovered that he had never known a woman and because of his polite manners. He was a blond boy, sixteen or so, probably a runaway from some neat middle-class home in an inland village. He came looking for adventure at sea. He admitted he had not worked on ship before but he proved an apt apprentice, and soon learned to chip decks and scrub bulkheads with the rest of the ordinaries. But he didn't learn their way of talking so easily and he was very shy. He didn't grab for the potato pan at meals and try to snatch the largest potato. Indeed, if he got no potatoes at all he said nothing.

> "O, give us some time to
> Blow the man down!"

On the hatch in front of the after-deck house in the early evening, dinner over, the talk had been of sailing ships and the old days of the sea. Paddy, in a deep Irish brogue, was telling his wild experiences on whalers. Over against the rail the Swede sang, to himself, a chantey which some of the steamship men had never even heard:

> "What do you think
> We had for breakfast?
> Wey, hey!
> Blow the man down!"

The warm wind came from the South and the faint throb of the engines and the chug, chug, of the propeller accompanied his song:

> "A monkey's heart
> And a donkey's liver.
> Give us some time to
> Blow the man down!"

"Yez," said Paddy, "When the old John Emory went to Rio, them was the days."

> "O, they sailed us down
> The Congo River
> Wey, hey!
> Blow the man down!"

One of the A. B.'s on watch passed with a lighted lantern, went up the iron stairs, and hung it over the stern of the ship. It was getting dark. The blue depths of the sky began to be dotted with stars and the little waves below lapped languidly, one on the other.

> "And O! I'll sail
> The seas forever.
> Give us some time to
> Blow the man down!"

"Say, was everybody in your town as dumb as you?" Eric demanded suddenly of the Little Virgin.

"Heck, no!" the kid answered. "My father——"

"Why don't you say, 'Hell, no,' you pink angel?" Jerry drawled.

"Hell—no," said the boy slowly for he hadn't yet learned to swear with the facility of the sea.

"Women won't think you're a sailor 'less you learn to cuss better 'an that there 'Gol darn' and 'By heck' you got,—like some country hay-seed 'stead of a seaman."

"Yes, sir," said the boy.

"Hombre! Who ever says he was a seaman," laughed Porto Rico.

"And we're gona show you some women in Horta next week. I been there before, Virgin, and I know 'em. They're wild and they'll lead you to slaughter. Show us how you make love, kid."

And then the torture of the self-conscious and embarrassed boy began,—he who was the daily butt of sailors' jibes and vulgar jokes. The men liked him and the cleanness of him, but the fun of seeing him red and confused was too great to resist. So everything the youngster did or said by day became a subject for ribald wit and ridicule at night on the after-hatch. And the lad, who was unable to banter jokes and obscenities, looked lost and alone and very miserable. Everyone seemed his enemy, no one his friend. Words can be terribly cruel when a person does not know how to construct a defense or laugh at a joke.

"I don't know how to make love," the boy said.

"O, you Little Virgin! Mama's nice baby!" Chips sang in falsetto.

"Pretty Percy!"

"What kind a sailor is this?"

> "Now he was all
> Most twenty-three.
> But still sat on
> His mother's knee.
> He'd never . . ."

"Say, kid, tell us . . .," began one of the Greek firemen.

"Don't tell that Greek nothin', Virgin." It was Mike from Newark speaking. "Get up an' sock him in the eye!"

The absurdity of this command brought a gale of laughter from the men on the hatch. Chips rolled over and over. But for some reason or other it angered the fireman.

"What a hell you tell da kid to hit me for? You would ain't do it yourself," the Greek yelled.

"Stand up an' see if I won't," countered Mike. There hadn't been a fight on board for three days now and the ship plowed slowly and calmly through the water under the starry darkness. Things were dull and quiet like the slow move of the steamer. "I'm tired o' you guys ridin' the Virgin anyhow. You must think he likes it. He's a good kid and he don't bother none o' you."

"He's no you brother," said the Greek. And he made a sudden plunge at Mike from Newark, but in an instant the fireman was going backward toward the bulkhead sent there by a blow from the New Jersey man's fist. Then, before the Greek could recover his balance, the bo'sun sprang between them.

"Stop this fight," he commanded. You dumb fools!" And two or three sailors grabbed each of the combatants by the arms.

"Damn!" said Eric. "The bo'sun's always stoppin' fights."

"That's dirty," I agreed, because I wanted to see the fight go on, too.

But Mike and the Greek were held apart until, each struggling nobly to get at the other, their vocabulary of insults in both the language of the Hellespont and Newark were exhausted. Then Mike, with a final oath regarding the parentage of all Greeks, turned to the frightened Little Virgin and said, "Come on, kid, let's go inside. I'll teach you to play pinochle." And the two of them left the deck.

"Sure, that's the best you can do is play pinochle," somebody jeered, while the fireman began to talk rapidly to a fellow countryman. An hour later when I passed the mess-room door on my way to bed I saw the Little Virgin and Mike from Newark leaning on the wooden table deep in conversation. And the young boy looked happy for the first time since leaving New York. He had seemingly found a friend.

So the days passed filled with sunshine and the slow roll of the little waves. And the nights passed warm and starry as the old freighter steamed unhurriedly through the black waters toward Africa. And the dawns came pink and gold, strangely cool and calm with a magic vastness about them lying softly on the wide circle of the waters. Then the sun would shoot up, disturbing the colorful quiet. And some mornings there would be flying-fish lying on the deck which the third mate, coming down from the bridge, would pick up and take to the galley to have cooked for his breakfast. At eight bells the watch changed and the Little Virgin, along with the rest of the ordinaries, would come out for work.

The Virgin and Mike from Newark were boon companions now. They worked together during the day and played cards or talked at night. From Mike the kid learned how to tie sailors' knots, how to do the least work with the greatest appearance of effort, and how to lower a life boat during fire-drill. He began to learn, too, the vocabulary of the sea, to pick up a varied

string of true seamen's oaths, and to acquire an amusing collection of filthy stories. Everything that Mike did, the Little Virgin tried to do, too. Before the village boy this young sailor from Newark seemed a model of all the manly virtues. And Mike had lived a life which the Virgin envied and wished to emulate. He, like the Virgin, had left home without telling anybody and in his three years away from the paternal roof had visited half the ports of the world. Furthermore, to hear Mike talk, there had been many thrilling and dangerous adventures in the strange places he had known. The Little Virgin would sit for hours, with the greatest credulity, listening to the Newark boy's stories. Then he would dream of the things that would happen to himself some day and how he would go back home and tell the fellows in his little village about them while they stood open-mouthed and amazed around this wanderer returned.

So the days passed and the "West Illana" put in at a port in Senegal. That night after dinner almost everybody went ashore. There was good business in the French wine shops where seamen and native women gathered before the night grew late. Porto Rico, Jerry and I were sitting at a little table in the crowded Bar Boudon when we saw Mike, the Virgin, Chips and Paddy enter. They were accompanied by four little dark girls and they all sat down at one table at the far end of the room. Drinks were brought. There was much talking and noise,—a tangle of languages and sounds. A smell of beer, wine and smoke floated under the murky yellow lights. The blue blouses of seamen, the white coats of the native waiters, and the black faces of the little girls spotted the room.

An hour of drinking and laughter must have passed when suddenly there was great turmoil at the other end of the place and somebody yelled, "Fight!" I climbed on a chair just in time to see Mike from Newark strike the Little Virgin full in the face and send him sprawling backwards among the tables and the feet of sailors. Then I saw a black woman spring at Mike, her fingers like claws, and in her turn fall backwards, struck in the face, among the tables and the feet of sailors. Then somebody threw a bottle and the free-for-all began. The lights went out. And I went out, too,—into the cobblestone street and safety from the flying missles. By and by I saw Chips emerge from the mêlée and I asked him how the fight started.

"Over nothin'," said Chips. "All them darn fools drunk and one of the girls knocks a glass o' beer over on Mike and gets his pants wet, so he up and slaps her face and she crys. Then the Little Virgin hops up and says no gentleman would hit a woman so Mike up and hits him, too. The kid tries to come back at him but he knocks him sprawlin'. Then the girl tries to come back at Mike and he knocks her sprawlin'. Then somebody throws a bottle and hell breaks loose. And I comes on out. . . . Paddy is carrying the Little Virgin back to the ship now and the kid's cryin' like a baby and sayin' over and over, 'No gentleman would hit a woman. No gentleman would hit a woman.' He's drunk. But Jesus! All that fuss over a African gal! And Mike and the Virgin being such good friends, too. . . . Licker'll cause anything,—the rotten slop. . . . Let's go down the road and get another drink." And the carpenter took me jovially by the arm.

"No," I said. "I'm going back to the ship. I'm tired o' this stuff." And I went off alone through the quiet street toward the dock where the ship was lying under the stars against the vast blackness of the harbor, infinitely calm and restful.

I met Paddy staggering down the gangplank, returning ashore to join the drunken sailors. I said hello to the man on watch as I went aboard and crossed the deck toward the bunk house. It was very quiet on ship and the seamen's quarters were warmly lighted but empty save for one figure,—the Little Virgin who lay sobbing as though his heart would break, face downward on his dirty pillow. It was strange to see someone crying in that room.

"What's the matter, kid?" I said.

"He oughtn't to hit a woman," sobbed the Virgin. "Mike oughtn't to hit a woman." And the young boy kept repeating the phrase over and over and cursing between sobs, awkwardly like a child. "He oughtn't to hit a woman." His breath smelled of wine and beer and his face was flushed, damp and warm.

"You're drunk," I said. "Go to sleep. . . . Mike was drunk, too." And I pulled off his clothes, put a blanket over him, and went to my own quarters to bed. But for a long while the sobs of the youngster disturbed the quiet of the empty fo's'cle and I could not close my eyes for strangeness of the sound.

The next day, when we sailed, the Virgin was unable to rise from his bunk. His head ached. His hands were hot and he felt dizzy. That afternoon at sea, he began to sob again deliriously. Someone told the steward that the boy was ill and when the chief mate came back to take his temperature, he pronounced it a severe case of tropic fever and ordered him removed at once to the hospital in the forward part of the boat. As soon as the bunk was ready Mike picked the boy up and carried him there himself. And for three days, during hours off duty, Mike sat near the Virgin as he tossed and moaned, and turned from side to side, or sobbed, or talked aloud when the delirium returned.

Meanwhile the "West Illana" steamed slowly through a tropic sea. On the third morning the ship anchored at Calabar, the French doctor came aboard, and the sick boy was sent ashore to the European hospital. As they carried him down the gangplank in a blanket at high noon while the sun blazed, he kept sobbing over and over in the raucous voice of delirium, "Oughtn't to hit a woman. . . . No, no, no. . . . Mike oughtn't hit a woman. . . . God knows he oughtn't . . . hit . . . a . . . woman." And the blanketed figure trembled with chill in the heat of the African day. And his voice rose shrill against the rattle of the cranes lifting cargo, "He oughtn't hit a woman. . . . Oughtn't . . . never to hit a . . . woman."

Letters

Dear Mr. Owen:

Your contribution to the current number of THE MESSENGER, "Toy Business Men," is indeed a timely and illuminating treatise. I am in hearty accord with its tenor and the proposed program it sponsors. They fall within the category and are eminently the task of "The National Business League." The executive officers of the league should essentially be business men, chosen for their definite fitness who have had active participation in or successful contact with business.

As the league is presently conducted and the relative disregard displayed in the selection of its guiding personnel, I can't see a wider and larger service accruing to Negro business in general. If the league is to function as a clearing house of practical information, expert business counsel and constructive directorial service to Negro business, now is the time for an executive house-cleaning.

The scope of such an organization is broad. In our midst almost a score years up to the present there are only a few phases of several interests stressed or regarded. The surface within its realm hasn't hardly been scratched. Every business man knows the need of an organization in our midst of such a character and a dire need too. It should have its own mouthpiece—an informative publication presenting the problems and interests of Negro business and assist in devising means and ways to combat and intelligently countenance them. Wider concern should be directed by business interests among our group to get the league operating on a sound, broad and constructive basis, an organization to reckon with and its existence an influence for promoting and elevating Negro business on a progressive, profitable and higher plane in the economic firmament.

BERNARD H. JACKSON.

New York City, August 19, 1927.

To the Editors of THE MESSENGER:

Each month I notice THE MESSENGER is advancing in literary quality. I admire immensely the individualism displayed in the short stories written by our folk poet, Langston Hughes. The striking cartoons by Holloway are also a distinct contribution. I wish especially to congratulate Mr. Holloway. I see a marked improvement over the first things which appeared in THE MESSENGER.

LEWIS ALEXANDER.

Philadelphia, Pa.

NEXT MONTH:

The Negro Proletariat

By THOMAS L. DABNEY

Religion and the Working Class

By GEORGE S. GRANT

By GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

The Monthly Award:—This month the beautiful cutglass thundermug, decorated with red, white and blue ribbons, goes to that stalwart journalist, politician and fraternalist, Prof. Benjamin Jeff Davis, editor of the renowned "The Atlanta Independent," for the following gorgeous, if modest, contribution to the mirth of this unbelievably solemn nation, which appeared in the issue of his famed newspaper dated September 29, 1927:

"We do not believe the public would call us presumptuous if we should say the Independent is the best edited Negro paper in America and from the standpoint of good English, style, diction, simplicity, logic and common sense, takes high rank among American newspapers."

A Fraternal Suggestion:—The Americano, living amidst the dullness and drabness of a democracy and the machine age, thirsts for color and ceremony. Here in the land of Pittsburgh Plus, Service and E Pluribus Unum, are no bespangled feudal nobility to strut and canter up and down the thoroughfares on gaily caparisoned steeds and followed by smartly uniformed retainers. Yet the human soul of small dimensions craves these appendages of monarchy even in a republic. To march and perform in fine feathers is the desire of all but the intelligent minority, and not the least among those entertaining this desire are the sable brethren.

As a solution to this problem, we have had with us for some time, the fraternal order. Therein even the lowliest janitor, bricklayer, waiter, street sweeper or counterman, can satisfy his cravings by paying down a small initiation fee, going through the imbecility of a fraternal induction, and thus gaining the privilege to cavort in a uniform that would turn an Italian admiral green with envy. How proudly they prance down the streets with their tin helmets and breastplates, multi-colored capes, patent leather boots, prodigious swords, purple pantaloons and dyed ostrich feathers. What a pleasure for the longshoreman or tunnel builder or dishwasher's helper to return home from his toil, bolt his ham and cabbage, don his field marshal's uniform and suddenly become Right Honorable Grand Protector of Cuckolds, Supreme Custodian of the Kotex or Holder of the Royal Forehead!

It is no wonder, with all of their inducements of an exhibitionist nature, that the fraternal orders have attained huge memberships and increased in number like bedbugs in a Bowery lodging house. There seems to be no withstanding the blandishments of a pretty uniform, weird ritual and a loud brass band. Even Garvey with his moronic schemes was able to get stalwart janitor-soldiers in his resplendent African Legion. We have a fraternal organization now named after almost every animal known to man and half of the prophets of the Bible. If the number of organizations continues to increase we shall have to start in on the insect world, if indeed some headway hasn't already been made in that direction. We have the Elks, Moose, Buffaloes, Antelopes, the sons and daughters of this, that and the other, and the knights of God knows who and what.

It seems passing strange, however, that none of the shrewd organizers of fraternal societies have ever thought of starting a society named after the plodding and dependable jackass. Certainly no more appropriate name for a fraternal organization could be invented than The Ancient and Honorable Order of Jackasses, nor could any name more accurately describe the members that would flock to it in large numbers. This society could have such titles for officers as The Right Worthy Supreme Jackass, The Exalted Royal Custodian of Jackasses, the Imperial Haunch of the Jackasses, etc. As a business proposition such an organization could not help but be a success. Ninety-nine out of every one hundred persons would be eligible. Of course there is a bare chance that numbers of people would not care to be known as Jackasses, even if they were quite eligible for admission, but it might be spiritedly argued that not only is the Jackass just as good as the elks, owls, buffaloes, reindeers, giraffes, antelopes, camels, eagles, and other members of the animal world after which fraternal societies are named, but is a more useful animal in the bargain. He is par excellence the apotheosis of Service—and what American, black or white, can resist the appeal of Service?

Aframerican Fables No. 12:—It was Sunday evening and the First Washfoot Baptist Church was filled to capacity. Aframericans in all of their finery crowded every pew. It was an auspicious occasion. The learned clergyman, the Rev. Yelp, was to read the report of the Board of Trustees. Everybody was on the alert with expectancy. After the usual social announcements and a brace of hymns the sable dominie got down to the business of the evening. What he had to say, in part, was as follows:

"Brethren, it affords me great pleasure this evening to announce that the Board of Trustees after considerable study of the situation has decided to stop the policy of depending on collections to pay off the various bills that confront us each year. Believing that it is not only a burden on the members of the congregation but is very unbusinesslike in addition, the trustees have decided to have no more collections taken up in the church. In order to maintain the church in the future and pay all current expenses, the Board has decided to sell the present property and with the money we already have in the treasury, erect a modern apartment house, with a church auditorium on the ground floor flanked on either side by a cafeteria, drug store, grocery store and meat market. There will be 50 modern apartments to be rented to members of the church at fair rentals. The Board has determined that the revenue from the apartment rentals and from the co-operative store will not only pay for the maintenance of the church and pay the pastor and his assistants, but it will put much more in our treasury than we have ever had before. I want to take this occasion to congratulate the Board of Trustees for the excellent manner in which they have solved the difficult problem of church finance and removed the burden from our congregation."

Now isn't there a fat chance of *that* being true?

Things You Never See: (a) A Negro fraternal organization that economically benefits its members; (b) A health clinic supported by undertakers; (c) A mob of crackers refusing to lynch a spade because doubtful of his guilt; (d) A pretty gal who has never received a proposal of marriage; (e) A Negro newspaper editor who is not subservient to theatre managers, the manufacturers of blues records and the makers of face bleach.

THE NEGROPHOBE

A soul-stirring drama translated from the *Mississippian* by Hiram Hootchhound, a noted literateur of those parts.

The Cast

General Hemptoter, the Senator.
Marjorie Moron, his secretary.
Hatton Hand, his butler.
Brownie, the Child of Mystery.

Scene:

The Library of Senator Hemptoter's home in Cretinville, Miss. As the curtain rises the Senator is seen reading his morning mail at his large library table. Seated near him is his secretary, a tall, rangy Nordic blonde, waiting to take dictation. She is industriously chewing gum and dangling one leg across the other, thereby exposing a very sightly limb at which the good Senator glances furtively from time to time. The Senator is grey-haired, plump, mustached, tall and on the bright side of fifty.

Senator Hemptoter: Awl right, Miss Moron. Ah guess we can staht naow.

Miss Moron: Yassah.

(*Continued on page* 331)

Business & Industry

Compiled by GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

Ace Forman, Negro aviator, has started a school of aviation in Los Angeles, California. *The Negro, it seems, is rapidly, and literally rising.*

Ernest C. Hutchinson, a Harlem Aframerican, has opened the "Hutchinson Recreation Academy" at 685 Lenox Avenue, corner of 144th Street, in the Mecca of the New Negro. The establishment represents an outlay of $50,000 and is reported to be the finest billiard parlor in the entire world. The place is beautifully appointed and there are accommodations for ladies as well as gentlemen, and seating arrangements for spectators to billiard contests. In addition to the billiard room with its array of $1,000 tables, there are eight bowling alleys, the finest that money could furnish. *This is pooling our money with a vengeance.*

The Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad has honored Mr. Lawrence Warner, a boilermaker employed by them, for his thirty years of service in that capacity. Mr. Warner resides at 3207 Market Street, Houston, Texas. He was presented with a gold button and a letter of commendation from the company. *And yet it is rumored that the Negro is not a dependable worker!*

Ludwig Baumann and Company, the largest furniture dealers in New York City, have retained the Negro law firm of Watts, Griggs and Flagg, located at 200 West 135th Street, New York.

Mrs. Laura Nutter Clark has opened the Blue Bowl Tea Room at 1743 North 22nd Street, Philadelphia, Pa. The new place is one of the best of its kind in the City of Brotherly Love, *a town where many beverages besides tea are drunk.*

The People's Finance Corporation formally opened its doors to business on September 17th, at 307 Bank Street, Newark, N. J. The first issue of stock totals $100,000 and sells at $12.50 a share. Dr. Roscoe W. H. Buckner is president and Wm. M. Ashby is manager. *A project that merits your support.*

Dr. Albert Banmann of Los Angeles and Clarence Mills of Pasadena, California, two far-sighted Aframericans, have started a farm to raise silver black foxes for the fur market where such pelts are much in demand. *Foxy fellows, these!*

In New Orleans a new Negro-owned business has started operations. It is the Tranquil Hand Laundry with address at 840 Governor Nichols Street. It is equipped throughout with the necessary modern machinery. Rev. E. J. Morgan is general manager. *Well, the race has washed enough clothes to know the business thoroughly.*

The Prudential Bank of Washington, D. C., of which Prof. John R. Hawkins is president, is making a strenuous drive to get in the million-dollar class. In July, 1923, it started with deposits of $47,000, and now it has deposits of $388,000. There are over 5,000 depositors. *There is no reason why Washington, the self-admitted home of Negro culture, should not also be the home of Negro finance. Ethiops are sufficiently plentiful there.*

Mrs. May Vesha has opened the Vesha Elite Shoppe at 1009 Texas Avenue, Shreveport, La., which will specialize in dressmaking and a complete line of ladies' wear. *A good field and a good location, and since the comely damsels of Shreveport (and they are really comely!) dress very well, the shop ought to be well patronized.*

The union and non-union longshoremen of African derivation recently attempted to settle their disputes on the waterfront of New Orleans by the time-honored method of staging a brawl in which a dozen or more shots rang out, and though the shots were not heard around the world, three of them took effect on two black toilers, killing one and wounding the other. The dispute is still unsettled.

Harry H. Pace, president of the up-and-coming Northeastern Life Insurance Company, recently contributed an article to the Savings Bank Journal, in which he pointed out that the first savings bank depositor in the United States was Curtis Roberts, a Negro, of Philadelphia, Pa.

Mrs. Josie Taylor, an exceedingly comely matron, has opened the Josie Taylor Chapeau, an exclusive millinery shop, at the corner of San Felipe and Bagby Streets, Houston, Texas. Mrs. Leon Bennett, another charming young lady, is the manager. *With an attractive line of hats they should have no difficulty in getting ahead!*

B. J. Hearn, manager of the Hearn Grocery Company at 1724 Davis Street, Jacksonville, Fla., recently reported at a meeting of the Jacksonville Negro Business League that several Negro merchants have started cooperative buying of staple and fancy groceries, at a great saving to themselves and their patrons. *Are these fellows really Negro business men?—this action seems almost too intelligent for that!*

John E. Skinner, a Negro, has been appointed manager of The Bamboo Inn, one of Harlem's great centers of night life. Mr. Skinner will have an all-Negro staff. The Bamboo Inn recently re-opened after being closed for a considerable period following a disastrous fire that mysteriously came after an unprofitable season. The place was formerly managed and staffed by Chinese, now become the principal restaurateurs of black Harlem. It is to be hoped that the Negro help will be more courteous than the Chinks were.

The Poro Company has opened up a branch in Chicago, Ill. It will be headquarters for the Chicago agents, and have available many assembly rooms, beauty parlors, and tea rooms for the public.

Miss Emma Lue Sayers, Mrs. Zella King-Taylor and Mrs. Anna E. Guess, three well-known Aframerican ladies of the City of Angels, have started a stenographic service bureau in Los Angeles. The girls are typists, stenographers, bookkeepers, mimeographers and accountants.

The Insurance Commissioners of Missouri have turned their thumbs down on Heman Perry, president of the Standard Life Insurance Company of Missouri. He must, say they, step down from his office if the company is to continue doing business in the "Show Me" state. So the company is looking for a new president.

Colored women in the canneries of Delaware work from 70 to 80 hours a week, are housed like cattle and get an average weekly salary of six dollars. *Hooray for democracy!*

Mr. Thomas H. R. Clarke, a prominent Aframerican realtor resident in the national capital, is authority for the statement that mortgage companies are more profitable than banks for Negroes at this stage in their economic progress, because of the paucity of mercantile establishments among the Sons of Ham.

Dr. James E. Shepard, president of the North Carolina College of Negroes, announces that a school of business adminis-

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My Choice

By JAMES MICKLES

Were I to shape the soul that speaks within,
  And mount each wave of thought expelled,
And take with ease, exotic manners in,
  Or master other forces none has quelled.
Then live amid the splendor of the monarchs,
  And speak of things the sages never knew,
And ride upon the tempest on the high seas,
  Or stay within the rose, like sparkling dew.

Were I to charm the heart that lives unconquered,
  And weave enchantment no maid could repel,
And bate the knight who reigns undaunted,
  Or sing a song no tongue excel.
Then listen to quaint birds among the bowers,
  And fly with vagrant eagles near the sky,
And tender sweet perfume like fragrant flowers,
  Or imbibe its whisperings as the wind go by.

Were I to these things tied, and born inherent,
  And you devoid of life and tender love
And all possessions looming but deterrent,
  I'd shape a soul with wings to fly above.
But let each power drift to paths untrodden,
  And lofty goals to me obscure the view,
And let me choose, though left unpardoned,
  This Platonic love that gives me you.

tration will be opened at his institution this term.

Mortimer M. Harris, well-known Washington, D. C., realtor, announces that the city of school teachers and government employees is to have a new $75,000 hotel for Negroes, which will be the last gasp in modernity. The owner's name is not given but the office of Mr. Harris will manage the hostelry when construction is finished.

The Alhambra Theatre, 126th Street and Seventh Avenue, New York City, has "gone Negro," is putting on brown skin productions, and has hired a "race" manager and staff of Negroes. This theatre formerly was widely known for segregating its Aframerican patrons.

What has become known in and around Harlem as "The Job You'd Love to Grab" has been given to Roscoe Conkling Bruce, Harvard graduate and former superintendent of the jim-crow schools of Washington, D. C. This fat position is director of the Rockefeller Foundation's housing project in Harlem. This project consists of 541 apartments, housing 2,000 persons, and covering an entire city block. Mrs. Bruce will assist him and there will be a capable staff of Negro workers, clerks and janitors.

Nail and Parker, prominent rent and lease men of Harlem, recently secured an option on an exclusive colony near Bar Harbor, Maine, consisting of 1,200 lots, which it is said they may develop as a summer colony for affluent Aframericans.

The Pea Island Coast Guard Station outside Elizabeth City, N. C., is officered and manned by Negroes, being the only Negro Coast Guard Station in the world. Captain George E. Pruden is the Negro in charge.

Mr. Edward C. Berry of Athens, Ohio, recently sold his hotel plant there for $100,000, and retired from the hotel and catering business that he has conducted for 35 years.

The Brotherhood of Dining Car Employees is seeking a new contract with the Dining Car Service of the Boston and Albany Railroad.

The National Association of Colored Waiters and Cooks which recently held its annual convention in Harrisburg, Pa., has changed its name to the National Association of Hotel Employees. C. H. Brown of Chicago was elected president.

The era of handshaking, idle boasting and mutual admiration in the National Negro Business League seems to be over; or almost over. The league is now getting down to business. It has established an information service for Negro business men where they can get all sorts of information on how to run their businesses more profitably and economically. The service is free to all members of the league.

My Dear Mr. Lancaster:

In renewing my subscription to THE MESSENGER for another year I want to congratulate you on the excellence of the publication.

During the past several years I have been making some special study and observation of Negro life, and I want to say that THE MESSENGER has been of great help to me in forming conclusions.

I cannot endorse and agree with everything appearing in the magazine of course, but that is neither here nor there—the fact remains that it is one of the most outstanding exponents of Negro life and of human rights in America. I treasure very much some of the articles written by Mr. Randolph, Mr. Owen, Mr. Schuyler, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Rogers and Dr. Henderson.

Whenever I come in contact with people of your race I commend THE MESSENGER to them, and I have been regularly loaning my copies to a young Negro boy of my acquaintance. I have also taken pleasure in showing the publication to prejudiced white acquaintances as an Exhibit A in Negro achievement.

Kindly do not neglect to see that I receive a copy of the rotogravure picture of Mr. Randolph, which you are offering to subscribers.

Yours very sincerely,
C. Warren Gutelius.

Northumberland, Pa.
August 31, 1927.

To Randolph

By MATTIE MAE STAFFORD

You come to us now
From the wonderful East,
Where men's thoughts are said
To live the best.

You come to us now
Bringing words of truths
To gladden our hearts
And to strengthen our youths.

That tells, they no longer
Are "worms of the dust"
That hearken to men
Who say, "you *must.*"

Be ruled by them
In things, that are (?) best
To grow and develop in strength
For life's tests.

Indeed, its not true
For God hath said,
That in this age,
All must labor for head.

By the sweat of his face
By thought or by deed
That men are brothers and
Must help each in their need.

With this divine truth
Growing bright in your soul
We hasten you on
To the God given goal.

With faith in His word
In which, He declares
That men should love peace
And not wrangle for wars.

Then, would hasten the day
As He also hath said
The "swords would be ploughshared"
And the hungry be fed.

Where houses would join
Each other in love
And God, blessing all
Through His blue sky above.

Would feed all and His children
With a tenderness rare—
From an earth-freed curses
All sorrow, all care.

Shafts and Darts

(Continued from page 329)

Senator H. Take this letter: "Col. Hefttie Flask, Ginhaven, Miss.: My dear Colonel: Your letter of recent date at hand. You and all of the self-respecting white people of this great state can always depend upon me to uphold our common interests while I sit in the United States Senate. As a life-long champion of morality, our white women and our family life, I have always strenuously fought any measure or action calculated to impair the purity of races. Above all, the integrity of the white race must always be safeguarded. To this end I am now drafting a resolution to further strengthen the barriers between us and the inferior race in our midst. I intend to introduce this resolution in the Senate at my earliest opportunity.

Assuring you that I shall ever be on the alert to protect the interests of our race and paticularly the morals of our women, I am, Sincerely yours,

U. C. Hemptoter.

Enter Hatton Hand.

He is about sixty; black, shrewd looking, slightly bowed and white haired.

Hatton Hand: Gen'l!

Senator Hemptoter: Yes, Uncle Hatton.

Hatton Hand: That 'ere boy Brownie is out there an' wants tuh come in.

Senator Hemptoter: Dad rat that 'ere boy. Ah bet he's lookin' fer some money. Er—ah Miss Moron, just step outside a moment 'til Ah see what this 'ere boy wants.

Miss Moron: Yes, Senator.

Senator Hemptoter: Alright Hatton, let that boy in.

Hatton Hand: Yassah. (He goes to the door and calls) Brownie! Come on in, son.

(Brownie enters. He is a handsome brown boy about 14 years old and strikingly resembling Senator Hemptoter. He rushes over to the General and embraces him.)

Brownie: Daddy!

Senator Hemptoter: Hello Son! (calling to Miss Moron in the next room) Bettah get that lettah off right away, Miss Moron.

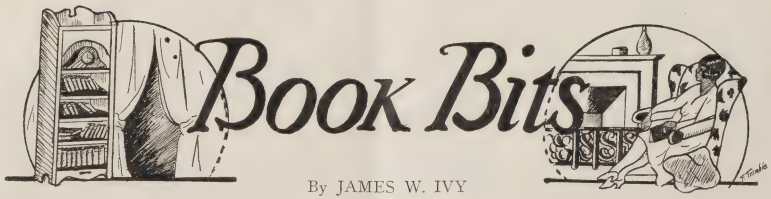
Curtain.

Prize Puns of The Month: The following, I believe, will be of interest to the millions of readers of this inspiring page:

1st: When Frank J. Harrold, Chief Atlantic County (N. J.) Detective, investigating the Lilliendahl murder was asked whether he was still seeking the two Negroes whom the murdered doctor's wife claimed had committed the crime, he replied with the following unconscious pun:

"We long ago discarded the idea that two Negroes committed this crime. That was nothing but a smoke screen."

2nd: Do Do Green, the Negro comedian was offered a part in "Porgy" the recently opened play of Negro proletarian life in Charleston, S. C. Upon reading the manuscript he discovered that the word "nigger" was used 101 times, and so he handed the manuscript back to the lady with the comment, "There are too many 'niggers' in that for me (meaning the epithet). Whereupon the good Nordic lady replied, "Why there are only four, Mr. Green (meaning the actors)."



By JAMES W. IVY

In Europe there has always been a large number of excess women; and the late war merely accentuated the problem, intensifying it to the point where several French writers came out boldly in favor of polygamy. Georges-Anquetil wrote a book, "La Maitresse Légitime," in an effort to abolish the French law against bigamy. Even before Georges-Anquetil, Dr. Binet-Sanglé had advocated the *Haras Humain* as a probable solution of the problem of excess women. Dr. Binet-Sanglé's idea is merely a modernized version of the idea, first set forth in Plato's *Republic*, that the best men in a community should be set aside for breeding purposes.

Yet none of these books have had as wide a circulation as the social novels of Victor Margueritte. The explanation is easy. Margueritte in his passion for social reform turns his head strenuously to the seamy side of life, and gives us Zolaesque details by the myriad, and this method always gets the readers.

Among the first of these novels is *La Prostituée*, a study of French prostitution. This book has never been translated and is consequently not known on this side of the Atlantic. Most Americans made Margueritte's acquaintance with the appearance of *La Garçonne*, a book which sold over half a million copies in France, was barred from sale in England, and circulated quite widely here in a thoroughly Bowdlerised edition. This story, we all remember, was that of Monique Lerbier, the bachelor girl. —*la garçonne*.. After *La Garçonne* Margueritte wrote two more novels on the new woman in her search for freedom: *Le Couple* and *Le Compagnon*. These three formed a trilogy under the general title: *La Femme en Chemin*.

Some of the problems of the new woman which were merely adumbrated in his first trilogy are now to be amplified in a new trilogy with the general title: *Vers le Bonheur*. Their titles are: *Ton Corps est à toi*, *Le Bétail Humain*, and *Le Chant du Berger*. The first of these novels has now appeared: *"Ton Corps est à toi"* (*Paris: Ernest Flammarion, Éditeur:* 12 *frs.*), *par Victor Margueritte*. This is a book which the general reader will probably never see, for I doubt that it will be translated, and if it is it will circulate in a Bowdlerised version. This is a powerful, realistic story of the problem of abortion. As Paccaud says, "Perhaps it is the truth of tomorrow! Perhaps, instead of secret abortions with their attendant risks . . . doctors will be legally authorized to practice abortion simply upon the request of the mother, just as they do today when the mother's health or life is at stake. You know that it is not abortion that I censure, but the dangers to which filthy hands and faulty knowledge now expose those women who have recourse to it. To safeguard the future, henceforth, women must be mothers at will." Then he goes on: "The right to abortion, as the right to vote, must be the goal of every woman." This is the thesis of the book. Now for the story.

The first three or four chapters of the novel are taken up with the childhood and the family life of Spirite Arelli, nicknamed, Spi, a beautiful, gifted girl, the daughter of parents of Italian extraction who are farmers in the Southern part of France. Spi is not looked upon with pride by her parents; she is so eccentric, so outspoken, so bold in some of her childish pranks. Although her parents fail to understand her, she is understood by her uncle Paccaud, a widely traveled bachelor and an intelligent man of the world. Spi falls in love with François who does not care for her at all, but another girl. Yet this does not stop her from telling him that she still loves him with all her heart. Later Spi becomes a maid to a loose living woman of the smart set who owns a chateau near her home. She is disgusted with the dissolute life of her mistress and her friends and decides to leave, but not before she attracts the eye of a *lion*, who makes up to her and is repulsed for his pains. He tells her that he will see her again. She does see this unknown one again as he said: one day while working in the stable he comes in, and finding that she is alone, violates her. After a few months she finds that she is pregnant; what must she do? she must not let her mother know it; so she finally decides to carry the sad news to her uncle, Paccaud. He was shocked. She told him the whole story. Then she told him she had tried to get the name of an abortionist in Marseille from Rosa, who has already had two miscarriages. Her uncle shows her how dangerous a thing an abortion is, begs her not to do this. Tells her to have the child, for "a child is a pain but not a dishonor." At home she is often sick, but no one suspects the true cause. One day she makes an unsuccessful attempt at suicide. She has taken rough-on-rats. But her uncle's prompt administration of an emitic saves her.

With her uncle's encouragement she desides to live. She is still in love with François, and one day she gives herself to him, tells him how she has been raped, that she is gravid, and begs him to keep it a secret. He assents. But he lets the secret out and it gets to the ears of her mother and father, and they drive her out, telling her never to again darken their door, for she has disgraced them. She goes to Marseille, tries unsuccessfully to get a job. She writes her uncle, he sends her money and advises her to go to a maternity hospital for her *accouchement*. Since her baby is not wanted she puts it in a foundling asylum. After many failures she finally succeeds in getting work, and eventually finds herself on the road to happiness and success. Wishing to keep other women out of the pitfalls into which she fell, she carries on a birth control campaign and distributes anti-conceptional literature. A friend of hers has an abortion produced and dies; the authorities are aware of her birth control activities and in consequence arrest her as an accomplice. She is innocent however, and manages to secure her freedom after her uncle comes to Marseille and unearths some old scandal on the judge. Like most of Margueritte's novels this one, too, abounds in many good phrases. "We need a new Christ," he tells us. "We must wash the soul as well as the body." Paccaud tells Spi. "Ton Corps est à toi" is a good story with all the conviction of artistic and real truth, vivifying the fate of the woman with the unwanted baby, and the crime that it is to bring such an unfortunate and unwanted one into the world.

"Walls and Bars" (*Chicago: The Socialist Party:* $1.50), *by Eugene Victor Debs.* This book is the fruit of Debs' brief term of imprisonment at Atlanta. Debs has seen the inside of American jails once or twice before he was sentenced to Atlanta for a term of ten years. In this book we find the very essence of Debs: his loving kindliness of nature and his quickening sensibilities for the downtrodden and the oppressed.

Truck Garden

By GRACE G. RICHARDSON

Lovely things I saw today,
Smooth round hills that rolled away
From closely planted sloping squares
Of multi-colored garden wares.

Strontian celery buds appeared
Dazzling brighter as they neared
The dull opaque of cabbage heads
That pushed through soil of earthy reds.

Blades of grass from recent rains
Sprang between the dead remains
Of weedy growths from years before,
Recarpeting the valley floor.

Buildings square, with angle roof,
Starkly stood, a bit aloof,
To shelter tools, a horse, the cow,
Browned men, their wives, and products of the marriage vow.

This book of Debs touches and thrills me, and I cannot help but think that it is the best book of prison experiences that America has produced. It is immeasurably above Alexander Berkman's "Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist"; for there is more love and more humanity in Debs' book. Take Debs prison creed:

"While there is a lower class I am in it;
While there is a criminal element I am of it;
While there is a soul in prison I am not free."

Many men of Debs' standing would have requested preferential treatment (which millionaires are accorded by right of class) while in prison; but Debs in a talk with the warden, Zerbst, said: "I gave him to understand that I neither desired, expected, nor would I accept any privileges or favors that were denied to other prisoners. All I asked was that I be treated like the rest, neither better nor worse."

"My feeling toward the prison from the hour I entered it was such that I rejoiced in the departure of each of those whose terms had expired, and I was saddened by the entrance of every man whose shadow was cast upon its grim portals."

Although sorely used by his fellow men, Debs remained the same kind hearted, smiling, loving Debs, and this book shows it clearly.

"Co-operative Democracy" (*The Macmillan Co.*: $3.00), *by James Peter Warbasse*. However one may regard Socialism in general, there is one form of Socialism—or perhaps I may say semi-Socialism—to which the most rabid Capitalist cannot refuse a welcome, not even Mr. J. P. Morgan, namely Co-operation and Co-operative Societies. These voluntary associations for Production, Distribution, and Exchange can carry on their operations, and flourish, without any formal disturbance of the established order. They are free industrial societies within the larger society, the State; framed to delight the heart alike of the communist Bob Minor and the conservative Mr. Hearst. Co-operation has provided a unique opportunity for the interchange of courtesies between the Capitalist lion and the Communist lamb. It is patent to all competent observers that sound economic benefits are conferred on the wage earning classes where these societies are in operation; it does not reach the poorest, unfortunately, but the thrifty middle class man and woman gets his goods better and cheaper when he takes shares in a Co-operative Society.

Says Mr. Warbasse in his preface:

"Co-operation is not found to be a palliative for smoothing the path of the poor, nor a scheme for softening the conflict between Capital and Labor. While it does, to a degree, ameliorate present ills, it is not a method of reform for patching up the existing order of society.

"A Co-operative society is a voluntary association in which the people organize democratically to supply their needs through mutual action, and in which the motive of production and distribution is service, not profit. The primary hypothesis of Co-operation is that the consumers are everybody, and that all of the machinery of industry and the organization of society should be for them.

"Consumers' Co-operative societies are usually formed by people who live in the same community and have neighborly interests. They organize a society to run a store, bakery, bank, or other business. Usually it is incorporated to limit the liability of the individuals. The members elect a board of directors and often other committees such as an advisory board, a committee for auditing, recreations, education, etc. The directors appoint a manager and other employees. Usually directors give their time gratuitously. Some societies pay them for the meetings they attend. In large societies executives are salaried and give all of their time to the business of the society. The meetings of the members observe the parliamentary principles that make for democracy of control and administration. They are usually held quarterly, although some societies hold only an annual members' meeting while others meet as often as once a month.

"It would be difficult to mention any useful business or service that is not undertaken by the Co-operative societies. Naturally the most common business is the distributive retail store. These stores are found handling all the things the people want, from pins to automobiles."

I give these lengthy quotations from Mr. Warbasse's book because I firmly believe that in co-operation and co-operative societies lies one of the solutions of the Negroes' present economic plight. We could have grocery stores, clothing stores, coal yards, and what not, run on the co-operative basis. They would save us money, give more of our people employment, and lay the foundation for a sounder economic order. We have a few co-operative stores scattered about the country, but not many.

Every Negro consumer should read this book. Mr. Warbasse discusses co-operation in all of its details, and almost every imaginable problem is examined in its relation to this movement. His study, too, is not confined to America, but to the civilized countries of the world.

Black American Reveille

By GEO. S. GRANT

Black Man! Bid your manhood waken,
Build your strength, regain your might;
Prizes by the strong are taken,
Earn your place, demand your right.
To the Service Summons harken,
Duty's call, do not neglect;
Let no cloud of fear-doubt, darken,
Black Men! Earn your self respect.

In this world with millions teeming
Black Men! Play your hardest game
Nor content yourselves with seeming,
Pretense wins no lasting fame.
Only by true worth and merit
May you rise above the crowd;
Naught can stay a dauntless spirit,
Black Men! Make your women proud.

Thru the ages read the story
Deeds will live, tho' men may die;
Choose the path that leads to glory,
Black Men! Sound your battle cry.
In the lists of competition,
Force your charger, break your lance,
Winning with cooperation.
Black Men! Give your sons a chance.

Young Black Joe

(*Continued from page 324*)

The way I sing it:

Fair brown, fair brown,
Who may your regular be?
If you ain't got no regular
Just take a look at me.

In the Bad Man Ballads I find a phony verse in Bad Man Labarus. It goes:

They began to wonder,
Lawd, they began to wonder,
Lawd, they began to wonder
Where Lazarus gone.

A Negro would express the same idea like this:

Nobody knows, Lord;
Nobody knows, Lord;
Nobody knows, Lord,
Where poor Lazarus gone.

Or perhaps like this:

Everybody wonder,
Everybody wonder, Lord;
Everybody wonder
Where poor Lazarus gone.

Running through other songs I find at

(*Continued on page 336*)

Wonderful Ethiopians of the Famous Cushite Empire

THE MOST THRILLING STORY OF THE AGES

By Drusilla Dunjee Houston

Educator, Author, Journalist

Claude A. Barnett, Director, Associated Negro Press: "We feel prouder of our heritage as Negroes since we read the things you have discovered."

Robert L. Vann, Editor, Pittsburgh Courier: "We know of no book published during the past quarter of a century which offers such irrefutable inspiration to the black peoples of the earth."

J. A. Rogers for the New York Amsterdam News: "The book shows a tremendous amount of research on the part of Mrs. Houston. The book grips you from the first and makes mighty interesting reading."

Rodger Didier, Critic, Associated Negro Press: "In no other book is there so much of the gold of Negro History. She has attained a hitherto unperformed service."

Cornelius Edwin Walker, white author, lecturer and psychologist: "You prove your contention that civilization came from the black race from the very first. Whoever, in either race, disputes your assertions has some task indeed."

Frank R. Crosswaith, for The MESSENGER: "Mrs. Houston has done what few other Negro authors have had the necessary patience and perserverance to do—viz., to gather from the record written by white men facts to prove that there is no such thing as a white man's civilization. She has delved deep to show that art, music, religion were all permeated in ancient days by Ethiopian influence."

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THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS

ACTIVITIES OF THE MONTH

NEW YORK DISTRICT

National Headquarters, 2311 Seventh Avenue

Roy Lancaster, General Secretary-Treasurer, reports that the membership in the New York district has increased by 45 during the last month. The majority of these new men came directly to the national office and joined the Brotherhood. There has been a marked increase in the payment of dues and a gradual increase in the payment of assessments.

W. H. Des Verney, Assistant General Organizer, recently moved to Richmond, Va., from Norfolk, Va., where he worked in the interest of the Brotherhood for about three or four weeks.

On December 9th, the New York District will hold its second annual grand ball at the Manhattan Casino, 155th Street and 8th Avenue. The ball last year was a very successful affair. Reservations may be made at the National Headquarters, 2311 7th Avenue.

It is reported that the company union elections will be held on October 15th, although they are supposed to be held the 2nd Tuesday in November. All of the members of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters have by this time received their instructions as to the proper procedure to thoroughly protect their interests.

Meetings of the New York Division are now being held at frequent intervals at the Coachmen's Union Hall, 138th Street, near 8th Avenue, and they are being very well attended.

Every Pullman porter and maid is invited to visit the National Headquarters, 2311 Seventh Avenue, when in New York, for the purpose of hearing the latest news and seeing the great work that is being done.

More and more porters and maids are subscribing for their official organ, THE MESSENGER. Every porter and maid so subscribing can obtain a life-size portrait of Mr. A. Philip Randolph, the General Organizer.

TWIN CITIES DISTRICT

(Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.)

Paul L. Caldwell, Secretary-Treasurer

1399 Sherburne Avenue

The city is afire with enthusiasm that Mr. Randolph and Mr. Totten are nearing this district and the plans are laid for the most rousing mass meetings ever held in any district in the country.

Arrangements for opening up the local headquarters of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters are going apace, but have not been completed. It is hoped, however, to have them open and hold a series of meetings before the arrival of Mr. Randolph, and also to entertain he and Mr. Totten there during their stay with us.

The Colored Women's Pioneer Economic Club of St. Paul under Mrs. W. J. Roberts, president, and the organization of the same name of Minneapolis under the leadership of Mrs. J. S. Wright, president, have combined to socially entertain Messrs. Randolph and Totten with a banquet and other features at the Phyllis Wheatley House in Minneapolis.

The heads of all the local organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League, the Elks' lodges and the Colored Women's State Federation of Women's Clubs are vying with each other to make our mass meetings a success.

The determination of the men in this district is expressed by the paying of dues and assessments, and the enthusiasm with which they are assisting in putting over the Brotherhood's programme.

Every member of the Brotherhood in this district should be a subscriber to our official organ, THE MESSENGER. It costs a dollar a year and each subscriber can, on request, get a life-size photograph of Mr. Randolph, the General Organizer.

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT

J. W. Darby, Secretary-Treasurer

2029 Davis Street

The men of Jacksonville are on the firing line for the success of the Brotherhood and are doing their duty wonderfully.

All of the summer conditions have been unusually difficult and hard in regard to working conditions because of the fact that a large number of trains have been taken off and the men transferred to various districts to the east and west. However, the men are now returning to the district and the prospect of doing considerable work to further the interests of the Brotherhood in this district, are very bright.

Mr. Darby reports that he hopes very soon to bring the Jacksonville District up to the level of the best districts in the country, financially and otherwise. He says: "The real red-blooded men here are doing their bit and I am doing my best to bring the slackers around to see the light."

Jacksonville members are urged to subscribe to their official organ, THE MESSENGER, and keep abreast of the doings of their union. The cost is only one dollar a year, and a life-size photograph of Mr. Randolph, the General Organizer, is being given with each new subscription from porters and maids.

OMAHA DISTRICT

Bennie Smith, Local Organizer

2522 Patrick Avenue

Despite the torrential rain, an immense audience turned out recently to hear Brothers Randolph and Totten tell the story of the struggle of the Pullman Porters for economic freedom and a living wage. The meeting was held at St. John's A.M.E. Church. The next evening another large meeting was held and a citizens' committee was organized to cooperate with Brother Bennie Smith, the local representative of the Brotherhood, in creating favorable public opinion and greater interest.

During the visit of Brothers Randolph and Totten, they were entertained by the Women's Economic Council of the Omaha District, and the entire membership was present at the meeting.

The Ladies' Auxiliary has begun to function 100 per cent and various committees have been appointed to devise ways and means of raising funds to assist the Brotherhood in its great battle of the century.

On October 1st the primaries for the election of candidates for local offices and delegates to the company union convention, were begun in Omaha, attended by the usual forms of intimidation and coercion. Stoolpigeon W. R. Estell, present chairman, is passing out ballots and will no doubt succeed himself since he is on the election committee or performing the duties to keep and count the ballots. It is not expected that he will count himself out. The outcome will be closely watched and his defeat is certain if any degree of fairness is displayed. The above refers to the P. P. B. A. Payment of dues is steady; a great number of men having paid up to January 1st, 1928. Ninety per cent (90%) of the members intend to be paid up to January 1, 1928, by November 15. Omaha members of the Brotherhood are prepared for a fight to the finish with the cooperation of the Ladies' Auxiliary and the Citizens' Committee. The bulldog spirit displayed by Brother Randolph was just what Omaha needed. It has never been so stirred.

Members of the Omaha Division are urged to subscribe to their official organ, THE MESSENGER, and get the authentic news about the Brotherhood activities. A subscription costs only $1 a year; 50c for six months.

ST. LOUIS DISTRICT

E. J. Bradley, Secretary-Treasurer, Organizer

Room 208, People's Finance Building

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has witnessed a very unusual change in conditions relative to the spirit and general attitude of the citizens as well as the porters of the St. Louis division. Men are joining daily; six joined one day. E. J. Bradley, Local Organizer, says he is now averaging two new men a day.

The Mass Meeting at the Metropolitan A. M. E. Church on September 18th, was largely attended, and proved a huge success. Mr. A. L. Totten, Assistant General Organizer, gave a beautiful explanatory lecture on the unfairness of the Negro Press, Stoolpigeons, Uncle Toms, Snitchers, and the Pullman Company officials, especially in St. Louis. The audience was so enthused over

facts as given by Brother Totten that his voice was drowned in applause many times. Mr. A. Philip Randolph, General Organizer for the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters was the next speaker on the program, and deliberated as only Randolph can. He brought out many points of interest, and many heretofore unknown facts were revealed. Hon. Holmer G. Phillips, a prominent lawyer of our race, and recently elected president of the Negro Bar Association, presided and performed the duties of a master of ceremonies exceedingly creditably.

The citizens at this meeting were aroused to action and held a citizens' meeting at the Y. W. C. A., Tuesday afternoon, September 20th, and there discussed plans to assist the Brotherhood in any manner desired to combat any opposition that now confronts it. The said Citizens' Committee held its second meeting Sunday afternoon, September 25th, at the Pythian Hall where a goodly number of citizens were present. The Local Organizer, E. J. Bradley, exhibited data as proof of the Brotherhood sincerity as well as activities. An answer from Mr. George B. McGinty, Secretary of the Interstate Commerce Commission of Washington, D. C., was read at the meeting and the citizens were overwhelmed with enthusiasm and demonstrated same by their loud and continuous applause. The Citizens' Committee is secretly planning a series of meetings in preparation to a determined attack on the opposition. These activities have inspired many porters to join the Brotherhood and have caused many slackers to begin paying their dues and assessments. All indications tend to show that the Brotherhood has at last begun to get power in St. Louis. We can daily see Burr and his forces weakening. The porters are using the slogan that the monkey used when the automobile cut his tail off: "IT WON'T BE LONG NOW."

Take the enemy, the St. Louis *Argus*, off your reading list, and subscribe for your official organ, THE MESSENGER. Learn the truth about your union activities.

BOSTON DISTRICT

S. M. Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer, Organizer

922 Tremont Street

The members in the Athens of America are doing their bit admirably. News of the flank attack of the Brotherhood of the Pullman Company by way of the Interstate Commerce Commission was hailed with delight and enthusiasm. The spirit is running high, and while there is the usual minority of slackers, even some of them are beginning to see the light.

The following news item will be of interest to Brotherhood men and women: Recently when Mr. Freeman addressed the P. P. B. A. he is quoted as saying:

"One time there was a meeting, and at this meeting there was somebody sleeping and at this present time there was somebody asleep when I started to make this present speech. In the presence of the superintendent and the other officers who happened to be present, this man began to snore."

Someone in the audience said, "Why didn't you wake up this man who disturbed them?"

"No, don't," replied Freeman. "I was referring to that man right over there. Don't wake up that nigger. If you do, I will break up this meeting."

Many Boston men, realizing the necessity of getting authentic and first-hand news about Brotherhood activities throughout the nation, have subscribed to their official organ, THE MESSENGER, at $1 a year.

Think This Over!

Since its formation in August, 1925, The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has:

Distributed 12,000,000 pieces of literature.

Its organizers have traveled 75,000 miles.

It has mailed more than 225,000 letters and 90,000 postcards.

It has held 3,500 meetings.

Over 2,000,000 people have been addressed in these meetings.

It has nearly 8,000 members.

It maintains offices in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Mo., and Kansas City, Mo., and Oakland, Calif.

Its National Headquarters in New York City occupies an entire floor on the principal business thoroughfare of the Negro community.

It has representatives in Washington, D. C.; Salt Lake City, Utah; St. Paul, Minn.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Norfolk, Va.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Denver, Colo.; Seattle, Wash.; Portland, Ore.; Omaha, Neb.; Oklahoma City, Okla.; Boston, Mass.; Oakland, Calif.; Cleveland, Ohio; El Paso, Texas; Pittsburgh, Pa.; San Antonio, Texas; St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo.

It employs 1 General Organizer, 2 Assistant General Organizers, 1 Special Organizer, 1 Field Organizer, 1 General Secretary-Treasurer, 21 Organizers and representatives and 10 stenographers.

Its accounting and statistical work is done by the Labor Bureau, Inc., New York, N. Y.

Its money is banked in the Corn Exchange and Federation Banks and the Terminal Trust Company in New York, the Lincoln Bank in Chicago, the Omaha National Bank in Omaha, Neb., and in prominent banks in other cities.

Those handling its monies are bonded by the Fidelity and Casualty Company.

Its attorneys are Donald R. Richberg, Frank P. Walsh, Henry T. Hunt and C. Francis Stratford.

Its official organ is The Messenger.

It is supported by the dues and assessments paid by members; thus if the members do not pay their dues the whole structure falls.

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

George S. Grant, Organizer

1315 E. 12th Street

The Porters of Los Angeles District held a huge mass meeting upon Mr. Randolph's arrival in that city. The new Lincoln Theatre, which is the last word in fire-proof theatre construction and which has a seating capacity of two thousand, was crowded to hear the General Organizer, Sunday, October 2nd. On Tuesday, October 4th, a dance was given in honor of Mr. Randolph and Mr. Totten at the Lawrence Dance Studio and was an overwhelming success. Mr. Randolph delivered several lectures while in this city, one of them before the student body of the University of California on Monday, October 3rd, and (another at Pomona College tentative). He was also entertained at a reception given by the women of the Economic Council and at a breakfast given by the Presidents' Council of the Federated Women's Clubs. These affairs, together with four membership meetings, kept the General Organizer and the Assistant General Organizer very busy during their week's stay in Los Angeles.

Brotherhood Members, Attention!

The Brotherhood has sent out a book of gifts to every member of the organization in connection with the Emergency and Welfare Fund Campaign. Every member will receive his choice FREE of any article in the catalogue for disposing of one of these books. It is earnestly requested that the members call for more books and enlist the members of his family and friends to dispose of books.

By special arrangements with the manufacturers a superior line of gifts has been secured for this drive. The slogan has been adopted "At least one book will be sold by every member of the Brotherhood." Those members who have already sold a book are loud in their praise of the wonderful gifts they have received.

A Special Headquarters for the campaign has been opened at Nos. 67-69 West 125th Street, Room 40, New York, N. Y., where all money will be turned in and premiums will be given out. Those members outside of New York will receive their gifts by express, all charges paid.

CHICAGO DISTRICT

M. P. Webster, Organizer

George Clark, Secretary-Treasurer

Headquarters, 224 East Pershing Road

At the meetings of the Chicago Division during the last two weeks, every available bit of space was occupied by the Brotherhood members, anxious to get the latest developments.

Membership of the Chicago Division has increased at the rate of one new member per day. The latest check-up shows a total membership for the Division of well over 1,400 men.

The news of the filing of the Brotherhood's case with the Interstate Commerce Commission and subsequent action of the Commission was very joyfully received by the Chicago membership, as well as visiting Brotherhood men from foreign districts.

Since these events have happened, every member smiles as soon as he comes in the door.

Every daily newspaper in Chicago carried an account of the filing of the Brotherhood's case with the Interstate Commerce Commission. It is rather interesting to note that not a colored paper in Chicago mentioned this fact. Apparently, nothing about the Brotherhood is considered good news by the local brethren of the press, unless it is unfavorable. Fortunately, the back door editors have spent their strength.

Clippings received at Local Headquarters from out-of-town papers show that most of the Southern newspapers are writing some strong and favorable editorials on the Brotherhood's fight.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of this Division had a very enthusiastic meeting September 8th, at Division Headquarters. About forty women were in attendance. A Reorganization Committee was appointed and plans made to carry on the work of the Colored Women's Economic Council on a more comprehensive basis.

The Local Organizer was presented with a wonder photograph of Dad Moore. It portrayed Dad in one of his "fighting moods." It has been framed and placed in a conspicuous place in our meeting room.

Special field committees have been organized by the Chicago membership. There is a committee in each of the fifteen railroad yards in Chicago, under the head of a captain. Although still young, the committees are getting good results.

The most enthusiastic reports are being brought into local headquarters by men from the West, on meetings being held by Brothers Randolph and Totten on their Western tour.

The Organization Committee has completed plans for the formation of a Credit Union in the Chicago Division. We expect to be ready to do business at a very early date.

A group of students from the universities surrounding Chicago visited the Brotherhood Headquarters Saturday afternoon, October first. They were addressed by the Local Organizer on "The Growth, Object, Scope and Purpose of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters."

Just as these items were completed, we received a pamphlet, apparently circulated by the champion "has been" of colored Railroad Men's Organizations. It contains the same old bunk about the insincerity of Brotherhood leaders, and the regular stool-pigeon stock arguments about the plan, etc. Those of us in Chicago who know this "old boy" and tried to make him a success and loaned him money when he was hard up, are glad to see him inject a bit of humor into the situation, and believe it is just another attempt to get another new winter overcoat.

There has been national interest displayed by Brotherhood members in this monthly resumé of the activities of their union. In order to be sure to get the authentic news each month, hundreds of members are subscribing to THE MESSENGER at $1 a year.

* * * *

WATCH FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE BROTHERHOOD'S BIG MASS MEETING IN CHICAGO

Young Black Joe

(*Continued from page 333*)

random: "I rather be daid in six feet o' clay" which should be "I'd rather be dead 'neath six feet of clay." "No one to pay my bail"; it ought to be "*Nobody* to pay my bail." "Thursday I was tried" for the stronger "Thursday they tried me." "Bandit" for *bad man*, "ill" for *sick* and "coon" where a Negro would say either *nigger* or just *man*. In these comparisons it will be noted that the text employs thin words that incline toward the abstract while the words suggested are fuller and heavier—words able to catch a sound and hold it. At the same time they lean close to the concrete, which is a distinguishing trait of Negro thought.

To me the most interesting part of the book is the section devoted to folk minstrel songs, but here the authors have compounded the fault of inaccurate transcription by printing inferior and corrupt versions of the songs when they could have easily obtained better ones. Their "Good Evening, Mr. Epting" is actually banal when compared with the original "Good Evening Miss Epps" which I remember as far back as 1908. In "Raise a Rukus Tonight" the third line of the chorus should read "Come along down by the riverside"; out side of that specimen A is all right, but it would be better if the law would let them print the rabelaisian verses. But specimen B of the same song has been confused with "Way Down Yonder in the Cornfield," a short harmony of sufficient merit to stand on its own. "Wring Jing Had a Little Ding" is a corrupt mixture of "Raise A Rukus Tonight" and another and more modern song called—well let us say it was called "I Want A Little Loving," only they didn't sing it "loving" back in 1908. It was arranged in couplets which were sung in connection with the short refrain, "I want a little loving." Here is a sample:

Loving once, loving twice,
Oh, My God that loving was nice.

I want a little loving so bad,
I want a little loving I never had.

Wear my dresses to my knees,
Give my loving to who I please.

I want a little loving so bad,
I want a little loving I never had.

If I live to see next fall
I ain't going to wear no drawers at all.

I want a little loving so bad,
I want a little loving I never had.

These alley songs of ours have certainly contributed their share to the increasing Restoration spirit so noticeable in American life.

Perhaps the authors deliberately excluded well known songs from their book, preferring to devote the space to saving some almost vanished ditty from extinction; still I cannot help regretting the absence of "I Don't Bother Work," a little beauty which many a Negro, wringing wet with sweat and twirling a pick over his head, had sung with great gusto. I miss, too, "To Be a Deacon in My Church" and "She Told Me Not to Be A Soldier." The first two songs are clean enough to be included in a Methodist hymn book, but the third, I'm glad to say, is not. All three are splendid harmonies. Most of all I miss that supreme classic of rabelaisian folk songs, "Uncle Bud." But the authors are not to be blamed for excluding that glorious ballad.

Mr. W. H. Des Verney, Assistant General Organizer, writes in:

Dear Mr. Schuyler:

Tomorrow will find me in Richmond for at least three weeks or more just according to how the men line up, I landed all but five here in Norfolk, and I think the organization will be better off with these men outside. Last week I spoke at the Booker Washington High School two days; first to Seniors, then to Juniors. . . The Longshoremen are well organized here and these men get the same wage as they do in New York. I spoke to them the first week after I landed.

You never forget your place here as there are signs always to remind you everybody is white but Negroes. I don't care how fair they come they are colored, yet the Greek, Jew, Chinaman and Japanese all sit up front and look back at you.

With regards to all, I am, etc.

Norfolk, Va. W. H. DES VERNEY.
October 6, 1927.

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PRESS OPINION ON PORTERS' CASE

"Abolish Tipping, Yes—But"

Editorial from the PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to investigate, with a view to raising wages and abolishing tipping. The Brotherhood, it is said, does not speak for all the porters, but for most.

The public is quite willing that wages should be fixed by any means agreeable to porters and employers. But it will not accept negotiation, mediation or arbitration of the great and glorious institution of tipping. The Interstate Commerce Commission may rule as it likes, but about tipping, the traveler will do as he has done; if pleased he will tip liberally and if displeased, or merely cranky, he will tip scantily or not at all.

The right to tip the Pullman porter is one of the few remaining vestiges of American freedom, not to be lightly cast aside. If the porters are determined to break up the practice they might try mixing up all the shoes for a change, instead of only some.

"Tipping"

Editorial from a Pittsburgh (Pa.) daily paper reprinted in the PITTSBURGH COURIER.

The organized Pullman car porters are demanding a living wage and the elimination of tipping. We hope and pray that their demands be met.

A living wage is a necessity. Tipping is an unmitigated evil. Every worker should receive at least a living wage. Justice demands that he should get more, in order that he may put aside something for the day of adversity.

When a toiler's days of usefulness to his employer are ended, he should not be thrown to the wolves. In his years of activity he should be encouraged to make provision for old age, so that he will not become an object of charity. If a man's efforts are rewarded with only a living wage he cannot save anything.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to take a hand in their controversy with the Pullman Company. The porters want their monthly wage increased from $72.50 to $150 and tipping abolished.

It is said that in fixing the wage the Pullman authorities take into consideration the amount received in tips from Pullman car patrons.

That is wrong in principle. It is an injustice to passengers and porters alike. When a traveler buys a railroad ticket and Pullman space and pays for the meals eaten on the dining car, that is all that should be required of him. He is entitled to the necessary services performed by the train crew, including the duties of porters and waiters.

When the porter, the waiter or any other member of a passenger train crew starts out on his run he should know what he is to receive in dollars and cents for the services performed. This amount should be paid by the employers, not by the road's patrons.

If the railroad or the Pullman company has to increase the fare in order to pay a decent wage, let the fare be increased to the necessary amount. By this means the additional expense entailed will be equitably distributed among the patrons and each employe will get what is coming to him. At the outset both passengers and porters will know what to expect and can govern themselves accordingly.

We do not presume to say what the wages of a Pullman car porter should be. But we do say that they should be sufficient to enable the porter and his dependents to live comfortably and decently, and they should be paid by the company, not by the public.

There is good reason to believe that employers other than the Pullman officials, when fixing the amount of wages, take into consideration the sums received by their employes in tips. This should be done. If the patrons of various enterprises know that those who served them received a decent wage they would not feel called upon to scatter nickels recklessly about.

Not only is the tipping habit a nuisance to those who do the tipping, but it has a tendency to break down the self-respect of the person tipped. A man may serve in an humble capacity without feeling himself less than a man. But if circumstance forces him to lower himself to the position of a mendicant asking alms, his spirit is broken and by degrees he may find himself drifting into the class of those who become the wards of public charity.

Tipping is inimical to the best interests of all concerned. Let's be done with it.

Comment from "Headlines for Table Talk"

INTERSTATE TATTLER, *September* 30, 1927.

The Pullman Company refuses to accept the invitation of the Mediation Board to discuss wages and working conditions with representatives of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. This is a reactionary and hard-boiled attitude, still we can understand and respect it. The Company is determined to fight to the last ditch to protect its interests. It is taking advantage of every technicality offered by the law and it is prepared to exert all the brute force of its wealth and political prestige. The officials of the Company are not paying any attention to the piffle about the interests of the Company and the interests of the men being identical. They know that what is good for the Company is bad for its employees and what is good for its employees is bad for the Company. It is a plain case of conflicting interests and they are doing their level best to see that the Company comes out on top. We do not see how any fair-minded person can censure them for that.

What we cannot understand is the continued protracted silence of the white Railroad Brotherhoods, who ought to be the natural allies of the porters. The only effective weapon left in the hands of the porters now is to create an emergency. Creating an emergency is a euphemism for calling a strike. We have our doubts whether the porters could win a strike. There is only one way to win a strike—by a concentration of force. The workers must be able to stop the machinery and to prevent other workers from operating it. The porters are too widely dispersed to do either. The Company would fill their places with scabs. Contraband porters could not give the traveling public efficient service but that would be the hard luck of Pullman passengers. In the meantime the striking porters would miss their pay and tips. Talk of justice to labor is all right and it gets a lot of applause but a man with installments due on the piano is not going to remain on strike very long.

While it is doubtful if the porters alone could win a strike the Company will listen to reason quickly enough if the white Brotherhoods take a sincere and manly attitude. They have only to declare their unwillingness to cooperate with scab labor and the Pullman Company will come down off its high horse. We are aware that the white Brotherhoods are not employees of the Pullman Company, and that fact, as we see it, would make their refusal to work with scab porters all the more effective. The public must travel. If a union train crew should refuse to take a Pullman car out because it was manned with scabs all the passengers with really important business in hand would take passage in a day coach. The railroad would get the money and the Pullman Company would lose it. In the meantime, those scabs would be on the payroll. You can figure the rest out for yourself.

"Above the Law"

Editorial from THE PITTSBURGH COURIER, *September 10th*, 1927.

The refusal of the Pullman Company to carry the dispute with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters to the Arbitration Board as specified by the New Railway Labor Act, is an admission on its part that it considers itself above the laws of the country. Every other railroad company in the country has accepted, without a single exception, the good offices of the governmental machinery for the settlement of disputes between employees and employers. There remains the Emergency Board, to be selected by the President when an emergency exists. The porters' organization is now working strenuously to get this board appointed and functioning on its case.

Strange to note, the Pullman Company, at the same time that it was refusing to arbitrate the difference with the porters' union, was arbitrating its dispute with the Pullman conductors! The latter organization is a very weak and dispensable one while the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has enrolled well over a majority of the Pullman porters and maids, who are as near indispensable as any workers can be. Having tried by every means within its power to prevent the organization of the porters into a union controlled by themselves, and miserably failed, the Pullman Company in its desperation even flaunts the government of the United States in an effort to keep from paying its largest group of employes a living wage. This is practically an admission of the fact that it has no case, and the gesture should hearten those porters of a more pessimistic turn of mind.

The porters and maids have been making an excellent fight. It has been a fight waged against great odds. Curiously enough, most of the opposition has come not from the whites but from Negroes, a fact that is difficult for an intelligent, race-conscious Negro to understand. With the exception of one or two newspapers, nothing like sympathetic publicity has come from white people in all walks of life. Whatever the final outcome of the struggle, the porters and maids should maintain the excellent fighting organization they have created. Every group of workers in the country should be organized. There is no other way to wield any influence or exercise any control over one's work. The Pullman Company can more represent the porters and maids than a flea can represent a dog upon which it feeds. Any such contention is laughable and those who believe it are gullible, indeed.

"The Case of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters"

Editorial from NORFOLK JOURNAL AND GUIDE, *September* 17, 1927.

After a study of the several letters exchanged between Vice-President L. S. Hungerford of the Pullman Company and the Hon. Edwin P. Morrow, member of the United States Mediation Board, and between General Organizer A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Mr. Morrow, along with the comment of Donald R. Richberg, general counsel for the Brotherhood in connection with the dispute between the Pullman Company and the Brotherhood, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that both moral and statutory law is on the side of the Brotherhood and against the Pullman Company. Mr. Morrow sought, as provided by law, to mediate the dispute between the company and the Brotherhood. Failing in this he attempted to induce the parties to the dispute to submit the matter to arbitration as provided by law. To this the Brotherhood consented, but the Pullman Company absolutely declined to enter into arbitration with the representatives of the Brotherhood, basing its refusal on the claim that no dispute exists between the company and its maids and porters. The status of the case so far is that the Pullman Company positively refuses to join issue with the Brotherhood, that is, the company declines to recognize this organization of its maids and porters.

The Mediation Board, through Mr. Morrow, has exhausted all legal and reasonable means to bring the Pullman Company and the Brotherhood together, thus not only recognizing the Brotherhood's contention that a dispute between it and the company does exist.

The position of the Pullman Company in this matter seems to be indefensible. The Mediation Board has on its own investigation determined that the Brotherhood represents a majority of the porters and maids and is thus entitled to a conference with the company on any grievance, and accordingly sought both mediation and arbitration in the dispute, failing because of the positive refusal of the Pullman Company to enter into any such conferences.

It is to be regretted that the company has taken this position. It harkens back to the days of capital and labor feuds of unpleasant memory. The majority porters have the right through the Brotherhood to speak for all, and they have made certain demands that by all moral and legal dictates the company should mediate.

"The Pullman Porters' Flank Move"

Editorial from the BOSTON CHRONICLE, *September 24th*, 1927.

Balked by the tactics of the Pullman Company which is seeking refuge in arbitrary prerogative rather than join in determination of a dispute according to merit, or lack of it, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, claiming the right to represent the Pullman porters in contractual relations of wages and rules with their employer, resorts to strategy.

The move, undreamed of and totally unexpected, is a formal request on the Federal Interstate Commerce Commission for investigation of Pullman rates for sleeping and parlor car service.

The Commerce Commission has jurisdiction over nearly everything financial appertaining to railroad operation—except salaries and wages of rail officials and employes. Recently the Commission refused to permit the banking house of Morgan to handle the New Haven stock sale on the ground that the million-dollar commission the bankers would get out of the sale should not come out of the property. The Commission cannot raise the porters' pay nor abolish "tips." It can, however, rule that $5.00 is too much pay for a room without bath and private for one night on the Federal Express to Washington in view of the low nominal wage paid to the servant who chiefly renders the $5.00 service.

The move of the Porters' Union is strategic—a flank attack on the Pullman Company's fat pocketbook; and if Pullman management becomes convinced of favorable action on the Union's request, by the Commission recognition of the Union by Pullman won't be long; after which conferences resulting in a higher wage structure and reasonable rules will shortly follow.

The Pullman Porters' flank attack is wonderfully potential.

"Pullman Porters Face Technicalities"

Colorful News Movies, September 24th, 1927.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has bearded the wages and hours of service lion in his den by filing a petition with the Interstate Commerce Commission, a quasi-judicial tribunal, created by Congress February 4, 1887, for the purpose of regulating interstate Commerce by requiring all rates to be just and reasonable and prohibiting unjust discrimination and undue or unreasonable preference or advantage in transportation rates or facilities.

The act to Regulate Commerce has been amended several times, and the Commission has been given jurisdiction upon complaint, to determine and prescribe reasonable rates, regulations, and practices; and it is under this phase of jurisdiction, together with other technical clauses of common law that the Pullman Porters are braving the mysteries of the Commission's jurisdiction in an effort to secure a better wage and more equitable conditions of labor.

We laud the Pullman Porters for exhausting every device of law in their endeavor to raise the dignity of de luxe transportation service.

There have been several cases before the Commission which involved interstate commerce relating to complaints lodged by Negroes. (Most of them have been lost.) The porters' case, however, is the first

Negro case which seeks to tie up to the scheme of Federal regulation of interstate commerce the idea of securing wage increases for a group of workmen. The situation is indeed a novel one, and one the outcome of which, under the guidance of astute and learned counsel, it is difficult to foresee.

Since we are first, last and always for Negro organization, wherever the Negro is dealt with as a separate group, we trust that the brethren of the rail may win their case.

In the face of cold, cold law, which prescribes the jurisdiction of the Commission as being limited principally to passengers and property, we confess that it is difficult for us to see just where Brother Randolph's organization gets off.

From the bottom of our soles, however, to the top of last summer's straw lid, we hope we are mistaken; and attorneys for the complainant, who know the case far better than we do, may find some legal loophole which will give the Commission jurisdiction to decide the porters' plea; and if they do, we are sure that the long fight for wage justice will have been won.

The Slave in the Pullman

The following editorial is taken from "America, a Catholic Review of the Week," issue of October 1st, 1927. "America" is the leading American Catholic Weekly.

The nearest thing to a slave observable in this country is the Pullman porter. He has the same color, to begin with, and to conclude, he toils under conditions that are not remarkably dissimilar.

The ante-bellum slave received no wage, but, as a rule, he was provided with enough food to keep him alive, and in fit condition. His modern counterpart, the Pullman porter, manages to extort a money-wage, but it is not a living-wage. Far from it. But for the generosity of the public, he would starve. About half his income is doled out by the Pullman Company, a corporation of enormous wealth, and the other half is carelessly tossed to him—or in some cases, slowly given with unspeakable groanings of reluctance—by the traveling public.

The porters have presented their grievances to the Interstate Commerce Commission. They desire to work for a living, or rather, to receive a living in return for their work, and they dislike the plan of depending upon chance charity. They argue that their tips, which amount to about $7,000,000 yearly, are, in effect, a fixed charge on the public in excess of the rates allowed. Hence the practice of "tipping" constitutes a violation of the Federal law, and should be abolished. This done, the porters hope that public opinion will rally to their support, and force the Pullman Company to pay a living wage.

Whatever may be said of the legal and practical value of this argument, it is clear that the porters suffer from a real grievance. They have a right, founded on the natural law, and taking precedence of the right of the Company to declare dividends, to receive a living wage in return for their services. They do not get it. Unless they demean themselves as a mendicant class, they run grave risk of malnutrition.

It seems to us that a corporation which deliberately pays an insufficient wage, and cadges on the public to increase that wage, is a public nuisance. Further, a corporation which fosters the creation of a menial and mendicant class is contrary to public policy.

Two marvelous improvements have made their appearance in the Pullman care in the last twenty-five years. One is a separate curtain for the upper berth, and the other is a slot for discarded razor-blades. Apart from these alterations, the interior of the Pullman is much the same as it was at the time of the Buffalo Exposition. In other respects, too, the company shows an unwillingness to change, and the chief of these is a reluctance to yield to humanitarian ideals. Should it evince a willingness to revise its wage-scale upward in favor of the porters, the public will overlook its rooted conservatism in other less important details. Humanity comes first.

(*Note: Mr. Carey, President of the Pullman Company, is high in the Catholic Church in America.*—EDITOR.)

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"Best" Editorial

(*Continued from page 325*)

The twelve next "best" editorials for September are named as follows: 1. "Proxy Power," Kansas City *Call*, September 2; 2. (This editorial will be announced next month); 3. "Georgia and Racial Purity," Chicago *Bee*, Sept. 10; 4. "Caucasian Negroes," Pittsburgh *Courier*, Sept. 24; 5. "Open Conspiracy Openly Arrived At," Norfolk *Journal and Guide*, Sept. 3; 6. "Negro 'Rich'", Atlanta *Independent*, Sept. 8; 7. "That Lilliendahl Murder," New York *Amsterdam News*, Sept. 21; 8. "Sensing the Fitness," Chicago *Whip*, Sept. 9; 9. "Man and the Machine," *Journal and Guide*, Sept. 24; 10. "Burrowing His Face In the Sand," Oklahoma *Black Dispatch*, Sept. 2; 11. What Does He Mean?" California *Eagle*, Sept. 16; 12. "Seeing for Themselves," Chicago *Whip*, Sept. 10.

A Black Mother's Blessing

By GEO. S. GRANT

As you go away to the school today
Where the white man's books are taught,
Where the things you learn in your mind will burn
With my blessing take this thought.
That the Master's Plan gives to every man
Just the race that his strength can run;
If it's hard to win with a sable skin,
Then be proud you're a black man's son.

For the paler chap needs the handicap
And his books are full of lies,
But your mind will glean and the truth be seen
Which his prejudice denies.
Nor an even break will he ever take
Yet the race of life is won
With an honest start and a good stout heart,
So be proud you're a black man's son.

Musical Geniuses

(*Continued from page 319*)

attention? The miserable side of American Negro life has more often than not brought him through so many phases of struggle, mental anguish and disappointment that he has lost his keenness for recording in a musical way his youthful dreams. This is all the more tragic when we consider the great storehouse of folk lore and folk music which he has at his disposal. What magnificent operas might be written upon the tragedies of the slave period! One has but to glance through Carter-Woodson's pages of Negro history to find situations which involve possibilities which, if given form and life, might rival the librettoes of some

of the operatic masterpieces. The so-called idiom of the Negro spiritual and Negro labor songs abound in material for sonatas, string quartettes and symphonies. Study for a moment what Rimsky-Korsakoff and Tschaikowsky did with like material in Russian folk lore. Let us ask ourselves honestly and frankly if within at least sixty years a dozen out of twelve million Negroes should not have produced something worth while in these larger forms of creative work? If this lack of original work is caused by economic conditions, how are these to be remedied?

For the present period the Negro's acquisition of wealth has increased in an amazing degree. At what time are we to begin to think seriously of creating the social and economic environment which will best enable the gifted Negro boy or girl to acquire musical technique and to crystallize in song the imaginings, the surging emotion and the inhibited ambitions of a submerged race. The so-called "New Negro" has awakened to a powerful race consciousness. Is it not now high time that our men of some wealth contribute to this development? May we not create a "Fontainebleau" or hope that some Negroes of wealth will express a devotion for music akin to that of Julliard who left $20,000,000 for musical training of Americans?

The recent decision of the judges in the Harmon Foundation Awards that no Negro was found whose efforts warranted an award in the field of music was, to the mind of the writer, a terrible arraignment of our boasted musical achievement. White philanthropists are too busy aiding their own budding geniuses to give serious consideration to their Negro brother. The papers are full of the search for the great American genius of lighter hue. (It is fair to state that the National Association of Negro Musicians is trying to help their own along this line, but in a small way. One other case but that of a white philanthropist, is the assistance which George Foster Peabody is giving to Ballanta Taylor, the African.) A splendid example for us to follow is that of the American Jew who, not only makes it a religious duty to seek out the exceptionally talented members of his race, but sees to it that they get the best possible training and in many cases launches them upon successful careers and the world knows the result.

Ruskin said, "Great Nations write their autobiography in three manuscripts; the book of their words, the book of their deeds and the book of their art. Not one of these books can be understood unless we read the other two, but of the three, the only one quite trustworthy is the last. The acts of a nation may be triumphant by its good fortune, and its words mighty by the genius of a few of its children, but its arts can be supreme only by the general gifts and common sympathies of the race." What are we going to do about it?

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